PATTERNS OF POWER

Master Only of the Ground Beneath His Feet

French Côte d'Ivoire, 1842–1960

How France conquered a country that offered it nobody to rule through; how, wanting labour rather than land, it declined to build the register that would have made African holdings seizable; how it then ordered the peasants of the forest belt to plant trees, and so manufactured, by decree and for its own receipts, the propertied class that would eventually price its departure — and why the colony created by the same instrument on the same afternoon took the opposite road

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with Claude (Anthropic)

held as tested, not revealed

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE

PREFACE

On what this study is, how it was made, and what may be trusted in it

This is the Ivorian case study of the Patterns of Power collection, and it exists because of a decree.

On 10 March 1893 one instrument organised three French colonies on the West African coast, and in a single article it named, for each new governor, the throne through which he was to rule: the Fuuta Jalon for French Guinea, the States of Kong for Côte d'Ivoire. One signature, one afternoon, two territories constituted in identical form and differing in nothing an administrator would have thought material. Within four years one of those two thrones was still standing and the other was ash, burned by a man the same article had placed under a different jurisdiction. Sixty-five years later the first territory voted to leave France and delivered its people into a one-party state and a camp; the second voted to stay and became, for a generation, one of the rare prosperities of the continent.

The collection has already followed the Guinean road. This volume follows the other one, from the same starting instrument, and asks what actually separated them.

The answer this study arrives at is not a story about two leaders, though two leaders chose. It is a story about what was in the ground. France met, inside the line it drew round this territory, four different answers to the only question a conqueror really asks — *whom must I deal with in order to get paid?* — and almost all of them were unhelpful. Having no one to rule through, it forged its own chiefs and paid for them in force for

twenty years. Having no settlers to plant, it wanted labour rather than land, and therefore never built the land register that would have made African holdings into things a state could take away. Wanting receipts while tropical prices were high, it ordered peasants to plant cocoa and coffee — perennials, which take years to bear and then bear for decades, and which cannot be lifted, sold across a frontier, or carried on a head. By 1936 African cultivators held seventy-six thousand hectares of cocoa against eleven thousand in European hands, on land no register had ever entered.

The colonial administration did not intend to manufacture a propertied African class. It did so anyway, by decree, for its own reasons, over twenty years. What that class then did with what it held is the second half of this book.

On the collaboration. This volume was produced by its author working with Claude, an AI model made by Anthropic. The division of labour is the collection's usual one. The framework — position logic, the floor of force and the story laid over it, the two dials, the cost column, the seam held open by distance, the tested and the revealed — is the author's. The historical reconstruction, the source work, the prose and the production are Claude's, conducted under the author's direction and to the collection's standards. Where this study found the framework wrong, it says so on the page rather than quietly conforming; several of its conclusions were arrived at against expectations the project began with, and those reversals are marked where they occur.

On what may be trusted. The rule of this collection is that primary sources are quoted exactly and modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited, and that nothing is ever reconstructed from memory. This study leans hard on four public-domain texts: Gabriel Angoulvant's *La Pacification de la Côte d'Ivoire* of 1916, with General Galliéni's preface; the treaties of Grand-Bassam and Assinie of 1842 and 1843; the

decree of 10 March 1893; and the French statutes of 1946 and 1956. Every figure here that could not be traced to a source this study was willing to stand behind has been given as a range, flagged, or refused outright — and the refusals are recorded rather than silently omitted. Where the record contains only the conquerors' arithmetic, as it does for the dead of the pacification, that fact is reported as a finding rather than filled in with an estimate.

The reader should know the shape of the archive. Almost everything quoted here about what happened in this colony was written by the men who governed it or by the movement that opposed them. There is no neutral enumeration of the colonial period in this territory and there cannot now be one. What is offered is a structure and an argument, with the numerical claims kept deliberately thin and the gaps named.

On the method. The study sets the exact public words beside the exact private or on-the-ground words and lets the distance between them speak. It lays out the arithmetic and leaves the sum to the reader. It does not preach a conclusion, and where the conclusion is unavoidable it is because the documents make it so. Legibility is not pardon: explaining why an order made sense to the men running it is not a defence of it, and naming a legal fiction as a fiction is not the same as calling the people who lived under it fools.

Nothing here is written for effect.

Part of the collection Patterns of Power. Tested, never revealed.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE

THE ARGUMENT IN THIRTEEN PARTS

What each part of the study does, and what it finds

The Landscape — *Master Only of the Ground Beneath His Feet.* The worlds on the eve of conquest, graded by what each offered a buyer. A burned throne in the north, small rented monarchies in the east, a kingdom in the centre that had dissolved itself into self-governing villages, and no apex at all in the west. Beneath all of it, conquest upon conquest, none of it long cold.

One — *Eight Hundred and Forty Men, Budgetarily.* The seventy years between the paper and the possession. Treaties that threatened war in the clause promising protection; the French flag held on this coast by a private trader because the Republic could not afford a garrison; twenty years of small murderous columns; and a governor’s own admission of the force he held it with.

Two — *Vacant and Without a Master.* Who got what. A doctrine that vested every unregistered acre in the state, a registry almost nobody used, an office that was the whole of the African share, and a decree that dissolved a neighbouring colony and attached two million people to this one.

Three — *Peace, Organisation, Wealth.* The story laid over the floor, and the discovery that the conquered were never its audience. Two competing doctrines of French virtue, both addressed to Paris, fought out by colonial officials over the heads of a population one of them privately reported did not love them.

Four — *The Teachers Who Did Not Come.* What was withheld, and why. A ladder that produced some two thousand graduates for eight territories; and a Liberian preacher who converted more than a hundred thousand people in eighteen months at no cost to anyone, and was beaten and deported for it.

Five — *What a Man Could Not Carry.* Why the cultivator complied when the border was walkable. Flight priced at a month in prison, an administration that answered its leak by importing replacements, and the discovery that a man's ability to leave was a fact about his property rather than his country.

Six — *Four Francs Fifty, and Two Sixty.* The same cocoa bought at two prices; the same hectare subsidised at two rates; a state labour supply one class of planter received and the other was liable to be conscripted into. And the mechanism by which an extraction pursuing a rate manufactured, in the hands of the people it taxed, an asset it could not take back.

Seven — *Neither Parliament Nor the Courts.* How the press was closed without a censor, by a clause about citizenship in the most liberal press law in Europe. And the month in 1950 when troops fired, a senator vanished, the National Assembly debated it, the debate was printed, and nothing followed.

Eight — *Two Hectares of Coffee, Three of Cocoa.* The chain of interests audited link by link. Everyone in it lost by the arrangement's end except one man, who kept his trees — and the war that split the French state and led one faction of it to arm him against the other.

Nine — *Citizens of the Second College.* Whether the liberties were real. Eighteen months in which a subject population gained unions, a vote, citizenship and the end of forced labour; and the law five months later that put them in a separate electoral college until 1956.

Ten — *Twenty Lawyers, Ten Doctors.* Why a territory that had cost France nothing since 1950 was released by a war it took no part in — and why the arrangement's cheapest omission returned, at the hour of departure, as its strongest argument for staying.

Eleven — *Those Who Groan Upon the Roads.* What it cost. No famine, because there was no coordination dense enough to break; instead a disease geography the administration created by concentrating the dispersed and importing the distant. And an archive that counted rifles to the unit and gave no figure at all for the dead.

Twelve — *One Article, Two Countries.* The two roads set side by side, the crop hypothesis tested against the pair, and the strongest defence of this arrangement stated at full strength and answered — crediting the achievement without swallowing the self-justification, naming the cost without denying the achievement.

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PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — LANDSCAPE

MASTER ONLY OF THE GROUND BENEATH HIS FEET

Landscape · The worlds on the eve — the ground France surveyed, graded by what each district of it offered a buyer, and the finding that governs everything after

The inventory, written down in advance

On 10 March 1893 a decree organising France's West African possessions cut them into three separate colonies, and in the article that assigned each new governor his protectorate it named, for each, the throne through which France intended to rule:

> *Le gouverneur de la Guinée française est chargé de l'exercice du protectorat de la République sur le Fouta-Djallon et les territoires avoisinants. Le gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire est chargé de l'exercice du protectorat de la République sur les États de Kong et les autres territoires de la boucle du Niger. Toutefois les États de Samory et de Thieba restent sous la juridiction du commandant supérieur du Soudan français.*
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> The governor of French Guinea is charged with the exercise of the Republic's protectorate over the Fuuta Jalon and the neighbouring territories. The governor of Côte d'Ivoire is charged with the exercise of the Republic's protectorate over the States of Kong and the other territories of the Niger bend. However the States of

> Samory and of Thiéba remain under the jurisdiction of the superior commander of the French Soudan.

One signature, one date, two colonies, and in a single sentence apiece the answer France believed it had to the only question that matters at the moment of conquest — *through whom*. Guinea was to be held through the Fuuta Jalon imamate. Côte d’Ivoire was to be held through the States of Kong. The two territories that this collection will run against each other for the next twelve modules were constituted by the same instrument, in the same form, on the same afternoon, and the variable that separates them was named in the same article. Within five years of that signature one of those two chairs was still standing and the other was ash, burned by the man the decree had just placed, by name, under somebody else’s jurisdiction.

That is the arithmetic this landscape exists to lay out, and it is why the ground comes first. A conqueror is not a philosopher and the robe he will later wear is not yet cut; he is a man with weapons who has come to take a country and draw a durable income from it without fighting for it every day forever, and the price he will pay is not set by his intentions but by what the ground already contains. He reads two dials. The first is what the place is wanted for, which fixes the force his aim *requires* — ground for settlers is a different and far more expensive project than surplus from the people already standing on it, because the first needs them moved and the second needs them working. The second is how co-optable the order already there is, which fixes the force he can *avoid* — a going concern with a seizable apex can be entered at the top and run almost for nothing, while a country with no seat to take must be ground down and given one, and the giving is paid for every year in registers, garrisons and salaries. The gap between the two dials, measured against a budget fixed four thousand miles away by men who have never seen the place, is the whole of a colonial administrator’s actual problem.

So this landscape is not scenery. It is the survey a buyer would have taken, district by district, and the finding it returns is that there was no single answer anywhere inside the line France was about to draw. What France met, west to east and south to north, was four or five worlds with nothing in common but a border that did not yet exist — and the clearest statement of what that condition costs a conqueror was written later, in French, by a Frenchman, and set at the head of the book in which the governor who paid the bill explained himself. Gabriel Angoulvant opened his account of the pacification with an epigraph taken from Jules Harmand, and it is worth having in full because it is the study's central variable stated from the other side of the transaction:

> *Les tribus les plus inférieures sont incapables, en général, de dépasser, dans leur concept du bien public, les limites de leur village ou de leur petit clan. Les pays à population rurale, agricole ou pastorale sont les plus faciles à occuper, mais les plus difficiles à soumettre. La conquête paraît d'abord se faire sans obstacles, mais la guerre qui semble éteinte d'un côté se rallume de l'autre, et l'envahisseur, maître seulement du terrain placé sous ses pieds, s'aperçoit qu'il lui faudra déployer, pour venir à bout de la population, beaucoup plus de forces et y consacrer un temps plus long qu'il ne l'aurait calculé ! Des indigènes peu nombreux par rapport à l'aire qu'ils habitent, pauvres et médiocrement guerriers, présenteront une opposition tenace, universelle mais insaisissable. La pulvérisation des intérêts les rend diffluents et impalpables. Ils sont comme ces êtres inférieurs que l'on coupe en mille morceaux sans qu'ils cessent de vivre et de se reconstituer.*
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> The most inferior tribes are incapable, in general, of going beyond, in their conception of the public good, the limits of their village or their little clan. Countries with a rural, agricultural or pastoral population are the easiest to occupy but the hardest to subdue. The conquest appears

> at first to proceed without obstacles, but the war that seems extinguished on one side flares up again on the other, and the invader, master only of the ground placed beneath his feet, perceives that he will have to deploy, in order to have done with the population, far more force and devote to it a far longer time than he had reckoned! Natives few in number relative to the area they inhabit, poor and indifferent warriors, will offer a tenacious opposition, universal but ungraspable. The pulverisation of interests renders them diffluent and impalpable. They are like those lower organisms which one cuts into a thousand pieces without their ceasing to live and to reconstitute themselves.

Strip the contempt and the biology, which are the period's and not the analysis's, and what remains is an exact account of why a headless country is dear. There is nothing to seize, because authority is not concentrated anywhere; there is nothing to depose, because deposing a village head accomplishes nothing at the next village; and there is no single victory, because the war is not one war. A man who takes a kingdom takes its tax rolls with it. A man who takes a thousand villages has taken a thousand villages, and must hold each of them, and is master only of the ground beneath his feet.

The north: a chair, and the man who burned it

Begin where France thought its chair was.

The Dyula — Mande-speaking Muslim traders whose migration south from the old Mali empire had been running since about the fourteenth century — had planted commercial towns across the savanna belt, and at Kong, in the early eighteenth century, a trader-warrior named Seku Watara founded a dynasty over one of them. The state that grew from it, conventionally dated from about 1710, was not a taxing autocracy on the model France would have preferred but a decentralised commercial empire

whose substance was the linkage between merchant houses and the protection of the trade roads that ran between them, and whose distinction was scholarly: Kong and its northern neighbour Bouna were among the great centres of Islamic learning in the West African interior. The population beneath that Muslim commercial aristocracy was substantially Senufo and Tyefo and substantially not Muslim — which is the first instance in this territory of the recursion this collection insists upon, an order laid over an older population by an arriving people, cooled over generations into simply the way things were. Bouna itself had been founded in the late seventeenth century by Bounkani, an immigrant from Dagomba to the east. Neither state was aboriginal. Both were earlier conquests that had taken.

That naming is not a debunking, and the discipline has to be stated plainly here because the temptation runs in both directions for the rest of this study. To say that the Dyula order at Kong was built is not to say it was fake; a built thing that becomes the furniture of reality is more real for having been built, not less, and by the nineteenth century the Islamic learning, the law, the calendar and the commercial ethics of the Kong world were the genuine world of the people who lived in it — as authentically theirs as the French Republic was authentically the Frenchman's. The point of naming the origin is not to diminish the order. It is that the order was a going concern with a seat in it, and a going concern with a seat in it is the cheapest thing a conqueror can possibly find.

France knew it. Captain Louis-Gustave Binger reached Kong in 1888 on the great traverse he would publish in 1892 as *Du Niger au golfe de Guinée par le pays de Kong et le Mossi*, was received by its notables, carried their safe-conduct, and put the city's population at something on the order of fifteen thousand. Treaties followed — with Kong and Bondoukou in 1888, with Dabakala in 1889 — and five years after Binger's visit the decree

of 10 March 1893 wrote the arrangement into French law and handed the new governor a protectorate over *les États de Kong*.

And then the chair was destroyed, by an African conqueror who was himself retreating from France.

Samory Touré had built one empire in the upper Niger and fought France for years over it; driven eastward, he built a second across ground that included the north of this territory, and the Dyula towns lay directly in its path. He sacked Bouna in late 1896. Relations with Kong broke down over its rulers' dealings with his enemies and, in the sources' most common account, his armies razed the city in May 1897 — though the date is genuinely contested, with 1895, 1897 and 1898 all appearing in the record, and the confusion is partly real sequence rather than error, since Samory appears to have taken Kong in 1895 and held it for a period before destroying it, and French troops occupied the ruins in 1898. The demographic estimates run from Binger's fifteen thousand before the wars to a few hundred at the turn of the century; they are estimates, they vary, and they should be read as the shape of a catastrophe rather than a measurement of one. Samory was taken in September 1898 on ground inside this territory and died in exile in Gabon two years later. The kingdom of Kong survived on paper under French administration and was formally abolished in 1915.

Samory's methods belong on Samory's page and not on France's, and this study will not borrow one man's violence to soften another's. What belongs here is only the structural fact, which is stark: the single seizable apex in the northern half of the country, the one France had named in its own founding instrument as the thing it would rule through, was burned to the ground by a third party in the interval between the decree and the occupation. France arrived at the chair four years too late and found the seat gone.

The east: chairs at the margin

Eastward and southward the answer was better, and it is the reason France got a foot on this coast at all.

The rise of Asante in the late seventeenth century pushed Akan peoples west into the forest, and the states they founded there were conquest-states in the plainest sense: the Abron kingdom of Gyaman, established by Tan Daté, took its ground by subduing the Kulango and the Nafana who were already on it, and was then itself defeated by Asante — in the 1730s by the older accounts, decisively in 1740 or 1741 by the more recent ones — and held as a tributary for something like a hundred and thirty-five years until Asante's defeat by the British released it in 1875. The Anyi kingdoms of Indénié and Sanwi were founded in much the same circumstances and by much the same process. Sanwi in particular was a centralised monarchy with matrilineal succession and a capital at Krinjabo, and it was old enough in its dealings with Europe that a Sanwi prince had been carried to Paris in the reign of Louis XIV, baptised at Notre-Dame in 1691 with the king himself standing godfather, and returned home some years later with a French officer's commission.

These are conquest upon conquest, and the layers are dated and close together: an Akan migration of conquest in the late seventeenth century, an Asante conquest of that conquest in the 1730s or 1740s, a release in 1875, and the French arriving within twenty years of the release. Nothing here had cooled for very long.

But these were chairs, and France could sit in them, and did. On 19 February 1842 officers acting under Admiral Bouët-Willaumez concluded a treaty at Grand-Bassam with the Nzima king of that place, and on 4 July 1843 Fleuriot de Langle concluded another with Amon N'Douffou of Sanwi. In form these are the classic instruments of the cheap option: the king keeps his internal sovereignty and his people, France takes his external

sovereignty and a site, and France pays — a *coutume*, an annual rent, four thousand francs a year at Grand-Bassam to the sovereign and his heirs, running on the books until 1915. A conqueror who is paying rent to a king has not conquered anything; he has rented a doorway, and the rent is cheaper than a garrison, which is exactly why he pays it.

The limits of the option are the point. These kingdoms were small, they were plural, they were peripheral, and not one of them was territorial in the sense France would need. To hold Sanwi was to hold Sanwi. It gave you a lagoon, a woodcutting right and a landlord, and it gave you no purchase whatever on the forest a hundred miles inland, whose people owed the king of Krinjabo nothing at all. France entered this country cheaply at the eastern edge and then discovered that the edge was all it had bought.

The centre: the chair that was put down

The centre of the country is where the survey returns its strangest reading, and it is the strangest thing the survey found.

The Baoulé were Akan too, and their origin is an origin of conquest: a faction broke away from Asante amid a succession quarrel and migrated west, and the founding tradition — the queen at the flooded Comoé, the priest's verdict, the sacrificed child, *ba wouli*, "the child is dead" — is one of the great national legends of West Africa. It is also contested in nearly every particular. The dates cluster anywhere between about 1720 and about 1770; the sacrifice is attributed in some versions to Abla Pokou and in others to her successor Akwa Boni; and the scholarship includes a paper devoted specifically to the confusion between the two queens. What is not in dispute is that a real migration happened and that it was a conquest at the far end of it: the incomers displaced, absorbed and intermarried with the peoples they found, Senufo to the north and Gouro to

the west, and the second reign is remembered for wars that widened the kingdom to something like its later extent.

Here is what makes it structurally distinctive. That kingdom did not persist as a kingdom. Over the generations between the migration and the French arrival the Baoulé order devolved: authority settled into autonomous villages under hereditary village heads and lineage elders, unity survived as a symbolic attachment to Sakasso rather than as an office anyone occupied, and the political structure that France encountered in the 1890s was a dense mesh of self-governing communities with no apex above them. The kingdom had become a country of villages, and it had done so from the inside, without being conquered.

The consequence for a buyer is severe, and it shows in what the Baoulé wars cost: the resistance in this territory ran from the early 1890s to about 1911, was fought by dispersed forces out of village-scale organisation, and is commonly described as the longest sustained resistance to French conquest anywhere in West Africa. Angoulvant, surveying his own problem from the governor’s chair, put the mechanism in one line about the forest dweller that is worth more than a page of theory: *le Chef de village n’est pas souvent écouté* — the village head is not often listened to. That is what a conqueror means when he says a country has no chair. It is not that nobody is in charge. It is that being in charge is not transferable, because there is no office whose occupant the population is in the habit of obeying, and therefore nothing a stranger can step into.

The west and the lagoons: no chair at all

West of the Bandama and along the lagoons the reading goes to zero.

The Kru-speaking peoples of the south-west and the west — the Bété in their several hundred villages between what would become Daloa, Soubré and Gagnoa, the Dida of the south-centre,

the Guéré and the Wobé and the Grebo running down to the sea and across into Liberia — were organised in segmentary lineages. The standard descriptions are consistent: political authority did not reliably extend beyond the lineage or the village; among the Dida each village recognised a lineage as proprietor of its lands and little above that; among the Guéré secular authority beyond the village was weak and spiritual authority sat in separate hands. And they were not aboriginal either. The Kru groups are described as having been pushed toward the sea, within the two centuries or so before the French arrival, by Mande and Akan movements from the north and east — displaced, that is, by the same expansions that produced the kingdoms in the east. There is no innocent ground in this territory. There is only an older taking beneath every newer one.

This coast had a European reputation to match, and Angoulvant recorded it without embarrassment, noting that the penetration of the country had long repelled the boldest explorers not only because the dense forest was hard to enter but also because of the *mauvaise réputation — très justifiée* — of the people of the coast and the interior, which had long earned the colony the name *Côte des mal gens*, the coast of bad people. The forest itself he described as the thing that was bound to constitute the most powerful obstacle to French penetration and to be the refuge of the last resistances. He was writing in 1916, having spent seven years proving both propositions.

So the survey, completed, reads as a gradient rather than an answer. In the north, a seizable commercial apex, destroyed before France could occupy it. In the east, small monarchies France could and did rent doorways from, controlling nothing beyond their own borders. In the centre, an order that had possessed a chair and had put it down, leaving the memory of unity without the office. In the west and along the lagoons, no apex at all, and the study’s most expensive case. And beneath all of it, layer on layer of earlier conquest — the Dyula over the

Senufo, the Abron over the Kulango, the Asante over the Abron, the Baoulé over the Gouro, the Akan and Mande pressure that had driven the Kru to the sea — none of it more than a few generations cold.

The line drawn round it

What France had on this coast before 1893 was not an administration but a merchant. The colony's founding period is one of the purest specimens of insolvency this collection has produced: after the collapse of 1870 the French presence was left in the hands of François-Arthur Verdier, a shipowner and trader from La Rochelle who had been at Grand-Bassam since the early 1860s, and who held the flag on the government's behalf. Angoulvant, listing the names of the early period, described him without ornament as the merchant of La Rochelle to whom, during the war of 1870, the guardianship of France's interests on that part of the African coast had been confided. He was styled Resident, in one account unofficially from 1871 and formally from 1878, until the end of the 1880s; he planted the first coffee at Elima about 1880 or 1881; and in 1894 he founded a company named for a city that was about to be burned.

A state that entrusts a coastline to a private trader because it cannot afford a garrison has told you its budget. And a state that then signs a decree awarding that trader's successor a protectorate over states three hundred miles inland has told you something else — that the paper was written first and the possession attempted afterwards. Angoulvant's own diagnosis of what had gone wrong before he arrived begins with exactly that: *l'annexion a précédé la prise de possession*, the annexation preceded the taking of possession. The decree of 10 March 1893 created a colony of some three hundred and twenty thousand square kilometres, appointed Binger its first governor and Grand-Bassam its capital, and enclosed within one border the

burned north, the rented east, the villaged centre and the lineages of the west. The colony was not a country. It was a line drawn round several answers to the same question, and the running cost of the thing would be the sum of them.

What the survey came to

A conqueror arriving on this coast in the 1890s faced one practical question, and it was not about civilisation. It was whether there was anybody here he could deal with — a man whose word bound a district, who could deliver a payment, and whose place a stranger could step into. Where such a man exists the conquest is cheap: beat him once, keep him, and his people go on obeying the arrangement they already obeyed. Where he does not exist there is nothing to beat and nothing to keep, and the newcomer must build his own collectors out of nothing and pay for them every year for ever.

Inside the line France drew round this territory that question got four different answers, and between them they account for most of what followed.

In the north there had been such a man and the seat he sat in was ash before France could reach it — burned by a third party in the four years between the treaty and the occupation. In the east there were such men, and France dealt with them, rented doorways from them for four thousand francs a year, and discovered that a treaty with the king of Krinjabo bought Krinjabo and not one village beyond it. In the centre there had been a kingdom and it had put itself down: the Baoulé had devolved into self-governing villages while keeping the memory of a single people, so that a stranger found no office to occupy and several hundred settlements each of which had to be visited. In the west and along the lagoons there had never been an apex at all.

The third of those is the one worth carrying, because it is the least obvious and the most expensive. It is worse for a conqueror to meet an order that once had a seizable centre and dispersed it than to meet one that never had a centre at all. He inherits the absence of an office together with the presence of a people who know themselves to be one, so there is nothing to occupy and a great deal to mobilise. A country of unrelated villages can be taken village by village. A country of villages that remember a common origin can be fought village by village for twenty years, which is very nearly what happened.

And the northern case makes the same point from the other end: what matters is not only whether a seat exists but whether it will still be there when the newcomer sits down. France named the States of Kong in the founding instrument of the colony and arrived to find rubble.

One further thing the survey establishes, and it will matter at the far end of this story. Because a border of this kind encloses several answers rather than one, the price of holding the whole is the sum of them, and it is paid year after year rather than once at the founding. The two territories created by the same decree on the same afternoon were not alike in the only respect that governs cost. One had a chair that held. The other had ash, rented doorways, dispersed villages and forest.

What the place would be wanted *for* — ground for settlers, or the labour of the people already standing on it — the survey does not yet say. That is the settlement’s question. Two facts belong in the inventory against it and no further. The southern forest belt had deep soil and heavy rainfall. Nothing had been planted in it yet.

A note on sources.

Quoted exactly, from public-domain primary sources. The decree of 10 March 1893 organising the colonies of French Guinea,

Côte d’Ivoire and Bénin is quoted from the academic transcription of the *Journal officiel* text maintained by the Digithèque des matériaux juridiques et politiques (Université de Perpignan), corroborated by an independent reproduction of the decree in the Ivorian press and by the Archives nationales d’outre-mer’s own description of the instrument; the sources differ on whether the passage quoted is article 2 or article 3, and the reader should know that this study has worked from transcriptions rather than from the *Journal officiel* page itself. The Harmand passage is quoted as Gabriel Angoulvant reproduced it as the epigraph to the first chapter of *La Pacification de la Côte d’Ivoire, 1908–1915: Méthodes et Résultats* (Paris, Larose, 1916), Angoulvant citing Jules Harmand in the *Revue Bleue* of 16 and 23 July 1910; it is used here, though written after the events this landscape describes, as the coloniser’s own retrospective statement of the condition the ground presented, and is flagged as such rather than presented as contemporary testimony. The phrases from Angoulvant himself — on the great forest as the most powerful obstacle to penetration and the refuge of the last resistances; on the reputation that earned the colony the name *Côte des mal gens*; on Verdier as the merchant of La Rochelle to whom the guardianship of French interests was confided during the war of 1870; on the village head not often being listened to; and on annexation having preceded the taking of possession — are quoted from the same work, consulted in the Internet Archive’s scan of the 1916 Larose edition. That scan is optical character recognition of a century-old text and contains evident errors; punctuation has been normalised where the scan is plainly corrupt, and no word has been supplied that is not in the scan. Binger’s *Du Niger au golfe de Guinée par le pays de Kong et le Mossi* (Paris, Hachette, 1892) is in the public domain and available in full; it is cited here for his presence at Kong in 1888 but not yet quoted; his own words are used where the conquest itself is described.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship and reference literature. The account of the Kong state's foundation, its decentralised commercial structure, its Islamic scholarship and its Senufo and Tyefo substrate; the foundation of Bouna; the Abron kingdom of Gyaman and its subjection to Asante; the Anyi kingdoms of Indénié and Sanwi; the Baoulé migration, the devolution of the Baoulé polity into autonomous villages with a symbolic centre at Sakasso, and the duration of the Franco-Baoulé wars; the segmentary organisation of the Kru-speaking peoples and their displacement toward the coast by Mande and Akan pressure; and the sequence and comparative timing of coffee and cocoa diffusion, for which the specialist point that large-scale cocoa diffusion came later in Côte d'Ivoire than in the Gold Coast, under a more interventionist French policy, follows the comparative work of J.-P. Chauveau. The scholarly literature on the confusion between the two Baoulé queens includes a paper devoted specifically to the question by Kouamé René Allou (*Journal des africanistes*, 2003).

Contested figures and dates, given as ranges. The destruction of Kong by Samory Touré appears in the sources as 1895, 1897 and 1898; the most detailed accounts describe a capture in 1895, a period of incorporation, a razing in May 1897 and a French occupation of the ruins in 1898, and this study gives that sequence while naming the dispute. Estimates of Kong's population run from about fifteen thousand at Binger's visit in 1888 to a few hundred at the turn of the century; both are estimates and are given as such. The Baoulé migration is dated variously between about 1720 and about 1770 and the sacrifice attributed variously to Abla Pokou and to Akwa Boni. The Asante conquest of Gyaman is given as the 1730s in the older reference literature and as 1740–41 in more recent work. Verdier's residency is dated 1871–1889 in most accounts, with at least one source giving a formal assumption of the post in November 1878; the unofficial guardianship from 1871 and the formal title

are treated here as distinct. The introduction of cocoa is given as about 1881 in some accounts and as an experimental planting near Grand-Bassam in the mid-1890s in others.

Soft points flagged. This study has not yet established how far France in fact assumed the Fuuta Jalon apex in Guinea as against dismantling it, and the comparison drawn at the close of this study depends on it, and should be narrowed if the evidence requires. A striking claim of Baoulé depopulation during the conquest appears in the popular French reference literature and is not used here; it is examined against the demographic scholarship where this study counts the cost, rather than repeated.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 1

EIGHT HUNDRED AND FORTY MEN, BUDGETARILY

Module 1 · The Floor of Force — the founding conquest: who held the rifles, what they cost, how long it took, and the seventy years between the paper and the possession

The clause at the end of the treaty

The floor of force in this colony was laid down over seventy years, and its first course was mortared in a document that describes itself as an agreement between friends. On 4 July 1843, at Assinie, Lieutenant Fleuriot de Langle of the *Malouine* concluded a treaty with the king and chiefs of the Sanwi. Its final clause reads:

> *Le présent traité aura son cours dès aujourd'hui même, quant à la souveraineté stipulée, sinon les signataires s'exposeraient à voir leur pays en proie aux rigueurs de la guerre. Quant au payement des marchandises, il aura lieu au moment de la ratification du présent traité.*
>
> The present treaty shall take its course from this very day, as regards the sovereignty stipulated, failing which the signatories would expose themselves to seeing their country a prey to the rigours of war. As for the payment of the goods, it shall take place at the moment of the ratification of the present treaty.

Read the two sentences against each other, because the transaction is entirely contained in the order of them. What the Africans give — sovereignty — transfers today, on pain of war. What the French give — goods — transfers later, if Paris agrees.

One side is bound immediately by the threat of force; the other is bound conditionally by the pleasure of a ministry four thousand miles away. And beneath the text, where the signatures should be: *le roi Aigiri, de la plage, a fait sa croix* — the king of the beach made his mark. For the king of the interior, his nephew, another cross.

The treaty concluded at Grand-Bassam the previous year, on 19 February 1842, opens with the same machinery working from the other end. Its preamble has the king and his chiefs *considérant qu'il est de leur intérêt d'ouvrir des relations commerciales avec un peuple riche et bon, et de se ranger sous la souveraineté de son puissant monarque* — considering that it is in their interest to open commercial relations with a rich and good people, and to place themselves under the sovereignty of its powerful monarch. Whatever the kings of Grand-Bassam thought they were doing, that sentence was written by a French naval officer, in French, for a French archive, and it is the founding fiction of this colony in its earliest and most economical form: the conquered are made to say, in the instrument that takes their sovereignty, that taking it was their own idea.

Naming the fiction as a fiction is not the same as calling it empty. These instruments did real work, and the work they did was to convert an act of force into an ordinary lawful transaction that a metropolitan ministry could ratify without anyone at home having to look at a gunboat. That is what a treaty is for, in this business. It is also why France paid: a *coutume*, an annual rent, four thousand francs a year at Grand-Bassam to the sovereign and his heirs, still on the books to run until 1915. A man who is paying rent has not conquered. He has bought a doorway, and rent is cheaper than a garrison, which is exactly the calculation.

The flag in a merchant’s keeping

For the next thirty years the calculation held, because there was nothing to pay a garrison with. After the collapse of 1870 France did not so much withdraw from this coast as leave it with somebody. Angoulvant, listing the names of the early period from the governor’s chair forty years later, set the arrangement down without embarrassment: the illustrious names of the first half of the century, and then *celui de Verdier, commerçant de La Rochelle à qui, pendant la guerre de 1870, fut confiée la garde des intérêts de la France sur cette partie de la Côte d’Afrique* — that of Verdier, merchant of La Rochelle, to whom, during the war of 1870, the guardianship of France’s interests on that part of the coast of Africa was confided.

A shipowner from La Rochelle held the French flag on the Ivory Coast because the Republic could not afford anyone else to hold it. He was styled Resident — unofficially from 1871 and formally, on one account, from November 1878 — through to the end of the 1880s; he planted the first coffee at Elima about 1880; and his agent Marcel Treich-Laplène pushed the treaty line inland through the Anyi country in 1887 to 1889, concluding at Krinjabo, at Abengourou with Indénié and Bettié, and northward at Bondoukou and Kong. This is what a derived position looks like when the far end will not pay: the office exists because a paper says so, the paper is issued in Paris, and the man performing it is a private trader whose actual income comes from palm oil and timber. The characteristic texture is not brutality but *insolvency* — treaties concluded because campaigns cannot be afforded, protectorates asserted over ground nobody can garrison, and long hesitations that read in the record as caution and are in fact a budget line.

The decree of 10 March 1893 ended the improvisation on paper and not otherwise. It made Côte d’Ivoire a colony of some three hundred and twenty thousand square kilometres, appointed

Binger its first governor, fixed the capital at Grand-Bassam, and assigned the governor a protectorate over the States of Kong — a city Binger had visited in 1888, four hundred kilometres from the sea, which no French official could reach without a column and which would be burned by Samory within four years. Angoulvant's diagnosis of the whole period is three words long and he puts it first among the causes of everything that followed: *l'annexion a précédé la prise de possession*. The annexation preceded the taking of possession.

Fifteen years of murderous marking-time

What ran between 1893 and 1908 was not peace and was never called peace by anyone who was there. Angoulvant's own summary is flat: the period 1893–1908 is *une longue série d'opérations militaires*, a long series of military operations, and the peaceful conquest that public opinion in France believed to be in progress *a existé d'ailleurs plus dans les intentions que dans les faits* — existed, moreover, more in intentions than in facts.

The shape of those operations is the shape a headless country imposes. Tiassalé was taken by assault in 1893 by Captain Marchand; the same year Lieutenant Hayes, attacked at Abuakrou, lost close to half his effective strength. The following year Commandant Pineau took heavy losses attacking a village near Bassam, reduced a little later by the Monteil column, which was then directed against Samory, reached Satama, took Dabakala, and came back. Posts were built and besieged: Assikasso endured a siege of many weeks in 1898; the post at Salékro was blockaded, the relief column's commander gravely wounded on 10 September, the post assaulted again in October, and Salékro in the end evacuated. Angoulvant's summary of the tactical problem is that reconnaissance was carried out from every post *sans directive générale malheureusement*, left too

often to the initiative of post commanders, young officers or even simple non-commissioned officers.

That is not a campaign. It is a hundred small wars fought outward from a hundred stockades by whoever happened to be standing in them, which is precisely what the Menu predicts when there is no apex to seize: no single victory is available, because the war is not one war. And it is why Angoulvant, arriving in 1908, could write of *quinze ans de piétinements meurtriers* — fifteen years of murderous marking-time — and be describing his predecessors' record rather than insulting it.

The Baoulé country is where it ran longest. The resistance there is conventionally dated from the early 1890s to about 1911, is generally described as the longest sustained resistance to French conquest in West Africa, and was fought by dispersed forces out of village-scale organisation, which is the whole of its explanation. There was no army to defeat and no capital to take; there were several hundred villages, and each of them had to be visited.

Who carried the rifles

Now the number, because everything else in this module depends on it.

Writing of the situation as it stood when he took office, and complaining of the metropolitan habit of calling engagements in which French officers died "incidents," Angoulvant records the losses of the colonial troops in Côte d'Ivoire over sixteen months: *22 tués dont 3 officiers, 61 blessés dont 3 Européens ; au total 83 hommes hors de combat, plus du quart des pertes subies par le corps de débarquement de Casablanca* — twenty-two killed including three officers, sixty-one wounded including three Europeans, eighty-three men out of action in all, more than a quarter of the losses suffered by the landing corps at Casablanca. And then, in the same passage, the establishment

those losses were drawn from: *l'effectif total des tirailleurs présents à la Côte d'Ivoire était, budgétairement, non réellement, de 840 hommes*, the two existing native brigades included, out-of-cadre troops paid by the local budget.

Eight hundred and forty men, and the qualification is the governor's own: *budgétairement, non réellement*. Budgetarily, not actually. That is the floor of force for a territory two-thirds the size of France, and even the figure was a fiction, because the budget line and the men present were not the same thing.

Note also the arithmetic inside the casualty return. Twenty-two killed, three of them officers; sixty-one wounded, three of them European. Strip out the Europeans and what remains is an African army taking African casualties in the French service, which is exactly what it was. The composition is on the page wherever Angoulvant details a sector: at Sinfra, the ninth company of the first Senegalese regiment, six European non-commissioned officers, a handful of African ones, and a hundred and ninety corporals and *tirailleurs*. His own image of the fifteen years before he came is the same picture in miniature — one or two Europeans at the head of *une poignée de miliciens ou de tirailleurs*, a handful of militiamen or riflemen.

These men were the Senegalese Tirailleurs, formed by a decree of 21 July 1857 signed by Napoleon III at the initiative of Faidherbe, who wanted them because European troops died in West Africa faster than they could be replaced. The corps was built in its first decades on *rachat* — the purchase of slaves from their owners, the purchase price recovered from the soldier's pay over his enlistment — a practice formally ended in 1882 and replaced, on the standard scholarly account, by enlistment bonuses paid to a slave's master, by the incorporation of prisoners of war, porters and peasants, and by genuine voluntary enlistment for men who saw in the uniform a route to wealth or standing that their own societies would not give them. By the

eve of the Great War the corps numbered on the order of fifteen thousand across French West Africa.

And then the sentence in which the mechanism completes itself. Needing more men, and unwilling to keep the whole burden of recruitment on the north and centre which had until then carried it alone, Angoulvant extended conscription to the regions of recent submission:

> *ces mêmes hommes qui, la veille, luttaient les armes à la main contre nous, répondirent sans trop d'appréhension aux convocations des officiers, commandants de cercles et chefs de postes, leurs adversaires d'hier. Ils se sont battus, à l'ombre de notre drapeau, au Maroc, au Cameroun, en Turquie et en Europe.*
>
> those same men who, the day before, were fighting us arms in hand, answered without too much apprehension the summonses of the officers, circle commandants and post chiefs, their adversaries of yesterday. They fought, in the shadow of our flag, in Morocco, in Cameroon, in Turkey and in Europe.

Between October 1914 and February 1916 the colony levied thirteen thousand five hundred *tirailleurs*, seven thousand nine hundred of them in the last four months. A country that eight hundred and forty men had spent twenty years failing to hold produced, in sixteen months, sixteen times that number of soldiers for somebody else's war.

The strong manner

Angoulvant arrived in April 1908 and the doctrine he announced was named without euphemism: *la manière forte*, the strong manner. His summary of what it required is a single sentence and it is the coldest thing in the book — *il faut se résoudre d'avance à l'emploi presque continu de la force*, one must

resolve in advance upon the almost continuous employment of force.

Here this study has to correct a prediction it made before reading him. The expectation, stated in the working notes, was that Angoulvant would be found attacking the doctrine of *pénétration pacifique* over the head of its author, General Galliéni — who had, after all, written the preface to the book. He does not. He *claims* Galliéni. The chapter announcing the strong manner is headed by two epigraphs from Galliéni's Instructions of 22 May 1898, to the effect that the conqueror alone is strong enough to permit himself acts of clemency the people will not take for weakness, and that political action and the action of force are the two principal agents of the first period of an occupation. The chapter on sanctions is headed by Lyautey, on the pacification of southern Madagascar: there is only one way to finish questions of insubmission, which is to finish them completely. The section on internment carries Galliéni again, on rebel chiefs, around whom a void must be made by repeated and incessant blows until their disappearance or their complete suppression.

The correction matters, because it changes what the reversed robe is doing. The doctrine Angoulvant attacks is not the practitioners' doctrine and never was. He says so himself: peaceful conquest existed more in intentions than in facts, and his objection is to an idea he locates in French opinion at home, which he describes as being flattered by any proposition that sounds generous and humanitarian whether or not it can be applied. What his book actually does, therefore, is close a gap — between what the metropole believed was being done in its name and what had in fact been done continuously since 1893 — and it closes it by publishing. That is not a reform of method. It is the announcement of a method that was already running, made to an audience which had not been told.

The instructions of 26 November 1908 put the reason for the whole apparatus in one line which the rest of this study will return to. In his own summary of them, the moral situation of the colony was this: *nous ne sommes pas aimés ; il faudra modifier complètement la mentalité noire pour nous faire comprendre* — we are not loved; it will be necessary to modify the black mentality completely to make ourselves understood. Native policy was to be benevolent but very firm; it was dangerous to show weakness; the employment of force was to be avoided if possible, but if force were used against the French they were not to fear resorting to it in their turn. A governor writing in 1908 that his administration is not loved after fifteen years is not confessing a failure of manners. He is reporting, in the plainest available terms, that the belief has not taken and the floor is carrying the whole load.

Four sanctions

The strong manner had a technology, and Angoulvant sets it out under four heads with the tidiness of a man who expects to be examined.

Disarmament, which he rates above all the rest — if war fines and internments could not be imposed, he writes, if the tax did not exist and porterage were useless, disarmament alone would suffice to obtain a definitive tranquillity. The problem was that under the previous regime the trade in powder and guns had been almost entirely free and more than a hundred and fifty thousand rifles had entered the colony. The circular and *arrêté* of 21 August 1908 ordered them taken. The returns accumulate through the operational chapters: two thousand two hundred and twenty-seven weapons taken or surrendered in one sector by the end of one December; three thousand eight hundred and twenty-four rendered in the Man region by September 1911; ten thousand one hundred and twenty-one taken or surrendered in

that region by 31 October 1913. Beside the seizure runs a fiscal detail worth pausing on: the colony had been levying a tax on firearms, and in the 1911 budget Angoulvant provides for thirty thousand francs under that head instead of the previous year's one hundred and eighty, the shortfall being *the suppression of the arms tax in the districts where disarmament has been carried out*. The administration had been taxing the guns; then it confiscated them; and it recorded the confiscation as a fall in revenue.

Internment, pronounced under articles 1 and 2 of the decree of 21 November 1904, which permitted the internment of natives not justiciable by French courts, together with the sequestration of their goods, for a term not exceeding ten years. Some rebel chiefs were killed in the fighting; the rest were arrested and deported — the most culpable to Port-Étienne in Mauritania, *dont le climat différait sensiblement de celui de la zone sylvestre de la Côte d'Ivoire*, whose climate differed appreciably from that of the forest zone of Côte d'Ivoire, and the others to Dahomey, which enjoys similar climatic conditions. He states the climatic difference as an administrative fact and does not elaborate on it, and this study will not elaborate on it either.

War fines, whose legality, justification and moderation he defends at length. Their working can be read in a single operation. In the Morénou in October and November 1908 a small column moved on two compromised villages; its mere presence sufficed; the rebels surrendered without a shot being fired; the column was dissolved on 18 November having had no occasion to use its arms; the principal leaders were arrested and interned; and the compromised tribes paid, under the heads of tax and fine, close to a hundred thousand francs — *avec la plus grande facilité*, with the greatest facility, thanks to the exploitation of the gold-bearing deposits of the country. A month's work, no shots, one hundred thousand francs, and the

phrase “with the greatest facility” recorded by the man who set the sum.

The destruction of encampments and regrouping into villages, which is the sanction that reaches furthest into ordinary life and the one whose rationale is stated most clearly. The forest dweller, Angoulvant writes, likes to live in encampments deep in the bush, far from centres and roads, where he believes himself beyond reach; individualist and independent, he tolerates authority badly; if a village head says something displeasing, people simply leave and build elsewhere. And then the sentence:

> *L’Administration d’un pays est impossible dans ces conditions. On ferme la main sans rien saisir.*
>
> The administration of a country is impossible under these conditions. One closes the hand and grasps nothing.

So the destruction of encampments and the regrouping of the population into villages were written into the terms of submission. The Akoué, dispersed across two hundred and forty-seven encampments, were regrouped into seventeen villages, easily accessible; the Ngban were reduced to a handful of villages set along the staging road. The new villages were healthy, he notes, being sited away from hollows, and pleasant to look at, their huts of a uniform type well aligned. And then the maintenance clause: once the regrouping is done, one must go on for years still seeking out and destroying the encampments that are built anew — from quarrels with the chief, from disagreements in the village, or simply from the persistence of atavistic instincts of independence.

That is the floor of force in its final form. Not a battle but a permanent gardening operation, conducted annually, forever, against people walking back into the trees.

What the floor cost, and who stood on it

Three things are worth carrying out of this record, and one of them corrects an expectation this study brought to it.

The correction. It would be natural to read Angoulvant as a hard man repudiating the gentler doctrine of his elders, with Galliéni prefacing his own repudiation out of magnanimity. That is not what the book shows. He *quotes* Galliéni — twice, on force, at the head of the chapter announcing the strong manner — and Lyautey on finishing questions of insubmission completely, and Galliéni again on making a void around rebel chiefs by repeated and incessant blows. The doctrine of gentle penetration was not the practitioners' doctrine and had never been. It was held at home, by people who paid for the enterprise and could not see it, and Angoulvant's four hundred pages are not a change of method but a disclosure of one that had been running since 1893. Which means the date of a colonial officer's book tells you nothing about when the colony changed and a good deal about when he judged his readers could be told.

The floor was not big. It was continuous. Eight hundred and forty men, budgetarily and not actually, is a rounding error against the French military budget, and that is precisely why nobody at home had to notice. The expense of holding a country with no centre does not appear as troops. It appears as *time* — fifteen years before the method was even named, twenty before the Baoulé country was quiet — and as *dispersion*, a hundred posts each running its own small war without a general directive. And it appears as maintenance: the encampments had to be destroyed again every year, for years, because people walked back into the trees. A bill of that shape is paid in instalments, and a treasury four thousand miles away can fund a very expensive conquest indefinitely without ever confronting a price.

And the men who paid it were the conquered. This is the thing the record states most plainly and least intentionally. Angoulvant writes in one place that his administration is not loved and that the mind of the country would have to be wholly remade before the French could be understood; he writes in another that men who had been fighting him with rifles in hand answered his conscription officers within the year, without much apprehension, and went on to fight under the French flag in Morocco, Cameroon, Turkey and Europe. Nobody's conviction changed. What changed was that the arrangement began paying a wage, and a wage requires no agreement — only that a man do better inside it than outside.

That is how an order whose story never took can nonetheless be held at something close to the price of one that did. The tirailleur is not evidence that the French were believed. He is the reason they did not need to be.

A note on sources.

Quoted exactly, from public-domain primary sources. The treaty of Assinie of 4 July 1843 and the treaty of Grand-Bassam of 19 February 1842 are quoted from the transcriptions maintained by the Digithèque des matériaux juridiques et politiques (Université de Perpignan), which reproduces them from the texts published in *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*, tome 47, nos 168–169 (1960), in the study of the fortified trading posts of the Côte d'Ivoire, 1843–1871. All quotations from Gabriel Angoulvant — on Verdier's guardianship of French interests during the war of 1870; on annexation having preceded the taking of possession; on the period 1893–1908 as a long series of military operations and the peaceful conquest having existed more in intentions than in facts; on fifteen years of murderous marking-time; on the necessity of resolving in advance upon the almost continuous employment of force; on the moral situation of the colony in the

instructions of 26 November 1908; on the losses of sixteen months and the establishment of 840 men; on one or two Europeans at the head of a handful of militiamen or riflemen; on the extension of recruitment to the regions of recent submission; on disarmament outweighing all other sanctions; on the arms tax and its suppression; on internment and the climate of Port-Étienne; on the Morénou operation and its hundred thousand francs; and on the regrouping of villages and the closing of the hand on nothing — are from *La Pacification de la Côte d'Ivoire, 1908–1915: Méthodes et Résultats* (Paris, Larose, 1916), consulted in the Internet Archive's scan of the 1916 edition. The epigraphs Angoulvant reproduces from General Galliéni's Instructions of 22 May 1898 and from Lyautey on the pacification of southern Madagascar are quoted as he gives them, and are attributed here as his selections rather than as independently verified texts of those authors; the original instructions have not been consulted. The decree of 10 March 1893 is as cited in the Landscape. The decree of 21 November 1904 governing internment is quoted from Angoulvant's own reproduction of its first two articles.

A necessary warning about the scan. The Internet Archive text of Angoulvant is optical character recognition of a century-old printing and is corrupt in places. Punctuation has been normalised where the scan is plainly broken and no word has been supplied that is not in the scan. Two figures have been excluded for that reason and should not be sought in this module: the count of encampments from which the Ngban were regrouped, which the scan renders unreadably, and Angoulvant's tally of political internees remaining at the time of writing, where the scan gives component figures that do not sum to the total he states. The number of African non-commissioned officers in the company at Sinfra is likewise illegible and is rendered here as "a handful."

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship. The formation, recruitment and social composition of the Senegalese Tirailleurs, the operation and formal ending of the *rachat* system in 1882, the coercive methods that replaced it, and the corps' approximate strength before 1914 follow Myron Echenberg's *Colonial Conscripts: The Tirailleurs Sénégalais in French West Africa, 1857–1960* and the standard literature that rests on it; Martin Klein's work on slavery under colonial rule bears on the same question. The dating and character of the Baoulé resistance follow the standard reference literature and are given in the terms set out in the Landscape.

Contested figures, and figures deliberately not given. All casualty figures quoted in this module are French returns of French and French-service losses, published by the man responsible for the operations, and they should be read as such: they count the conquerors' dead. Angoulvant gives no figure at all for African dead, and this study will not manufacture one here. Estimates of the mortality of the pacification and of the demographic effect of the regroupings exist, vary enormously, and are examined against the demographic scholarship and given as ranges rather than repeated. Verdier's residency dates are given as in the Landscape, with the unofficial guardianship from 1871 and the formal title from 1878 treated as distinct. The duration of the Baoulé resistance is given as the early 1890s to about 1911, with the understanding that operations in the west and the forest continued past that date.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 2

VACANT AND WITHOUT A MASTER

Module 2 · The Settlement — who got what: the fiction that made a whole country the state's, the office that was the African share, the field the register never touched, and the decree that moved two million people by attaching a colony to a colony

What the instrument found

Before anything can be granted, it has to become the kind of thing that can be handed over, and in this territory almost nothing was.

The Landscape established what France met. Among the Kru-speaking peoples of the west and south-west, land was held by descent groups, each village recognising a lineage as the proprietor of its ground; among the Baoulé it was held by villages and lineages under heads whose authority did not reliably reach the next settlement; among the Anyi and the Abron it ran through matrilineal stools; in the Dyula north it was worked around towns whose wealth was commerce rather than soil. These arrangements differ from one another in every particular that matters to the people living under them. They share the one feature that matters to a conqueror: in none of them was land a *thing*. It was a relation between persons — a man’s standing in his lineage, his descent from those who cleared the ground, his place in a village — which happened to be expressed in access to soil, and which was for that reason

unsaleable. There was nothing to hand over. To sell your clan's land would be to sell your place in your clan.

The expectation is that the settlement's first act is the conversion of that relation into a thing: office into estate, lineage right into parcel, collective patrimony into share, occupation into vacancy — because only then can the wealth be granted. Côte d'Ivoire performed the conversion at the top and, for four decades, declined to perform it at the bottom. That asymmetry is this module's subject and it turns out to be the most consequential thing in the study.

Vacant and without a master

The instrument is a chain of decrees rather than a charter, which is itself a finding: there was no single foundational settlement here of the kind an agreement with a defeated king produces, because there was no defeated king to agree with. What there was instead was the *domaine*, and the doctrine that filled it.

A decree of 20 July 1900 special to Côte d'Ivoire was replaced by the decree of 23 October 1904 governing the domain across French West Africa, and the principle they ran on was *terres vacantes et sans maître* — vacant and masterless lands — which belonged to the state. The registration machinery followed: the decree of 24 July 1906 organising the regime of landed property in French West Africa, amended in 1925 and reorganised by the decree of 26 July 1932. And the doctrine reached its plainest formulation in the decree of 15 November 1935, which abrogated the 1904 text and restated the rule for this colony:

> *En Côte d'Ivoire, les terres vacantes et sans maître appartiennent à l'État. Il en est de même des terres qui, ne faisant pas l'objet d'un titre régulier de propriété ou de jouissance… sont inexploitées ou inoccupées depuis plus de dix ans. Les terres sur lesquelles les collectivités coutumières ou les chefs qui les représentent exercent un*

> *droit de jouissance collective ne peuvent être cédées ou louées qu'après approbation par arrêté.*
>
> In Côte d'Ivoire, vacant and masterless lands belong to the State. The same applies to lands which, not being the object of a regular title of property or of enjoyment… are unexploited or unoccupied for more than ten years. Lands over which customary collectivities, or the chiefs who represent them, exercise a right of collective enjoyment may only be ceded or leased after approval by *arrêté*.

Read the operation in three moves. First, a country whose peoples held land by lineage and descent is declared, by default, to belong to the French state wherever no French title exists — which is very nearly everywhere. Second, the exception is not ownership but *enjoyment*: customary collectivities exercise *un droit de jouissance collective*, a collective right of use, which is a thinner thing than property and which they cannot dispose of without an administrative order. Third — and this is the clause that will matter most — the test that separates the state's land from everyone else's is **development**. Land unexploited or unoccupied for more than ten years falls in.

This is the vacancy fiction, and by the study's classification the choice of fiction tells you what the conqueror wanted. But it is vacancy doing an unusual job. Where a settler colony reaches for vacancy in order to *distribute* — to declare an inhabited country empty and seat freeholders on it — France here reached for vacancy in order to *reserve*. The state took title to the whole and then handed out very little of it. And the machinery that would have converted African holdings into transferable things, the *immatriculation* register, was on the specialist account of almost entirely marginal effect: it existed from 1906, it was reorganised twice, and Africans scarcely used it. The great *coutumiers* that were supposed to record all existing customary rights, and thereby make them legible, were never really made operational.

So the settlement's paper claimed everything and its registry recorded almost nothing. That gap is not an oversight to be tidied away. It is the structural fact of this colony.

The chair that had to be made

If the African cultivator got no grant, what did any African get?

An office, and only an office. Most of this territory offered no seat a stranger could occupy — chairs at the eastern margin, a burned one in the north, a dissolved one in the centre, none at all in the west. France's answer was to manufacture them. The scholarly formulation is direct: colonisation introduced the canton chieftaincy everywhere in Côte d'Ivoire where it had been absent. Where there had been village heads whom, in Angoulvant's own words, people did not often trouble to obey, there was now a *chef de canton*, appointed by the administration, ratified by the lieutenant-governor, working to its instructions, watched closely by it and punishable by it at will.

What the office was for can be read off the duties. The created chief was the administration's man of all work — policeman, judge, census-taker, tax-collector, overseer of cultivation. He raised the head tax. He furnished the labour requisitions. He supplied the recruits. He was the point at which the *indigénat* — the administrative penal regime under which a subject could be punished by the commandant without trial — reached the individual. He retained a real conciliating jurisdiction in civil matters, which mattered to the people under him and gave the office some purchase; but his warrant came from the *cercle* office and not from any stool, and everyone concerned knew it.

Now the study's diagnostic question, which is the sharpest instrument in this module: **what did the grantee owe, and did it include armed service?** It did not. The canton chief owed administrative service — collection, requisition, enumeration, order — and what he received was a share of what he collected

and the standing of an office. A grant that buys service leaves a rival with a retinue; a grant that buys compliance leaves a dependant with a title. France bought compliance. It got several hundred dependants with titles across the colony, holding positions that existed only because a French official had written them into existence and that would cease to exist the moment he stopped writing.

Ask the default question of that man — if this arrangement collapsed tomorrow, would he be better or worse off? — and the answer is unambiguous. Worse. Everything he holds is held from the arrangement. Hold that answer. There is another tier in this colony whose answer is different, and the difference decides a great deal.

What the Europeans got, and where

The European share was land, timber and the corridor, and it was carved out of the domain the vacancy fiction had created.

The concession system worked by *mise en valeur*: a provisional concession granted, a definitive one confirmed upon proof that the ground had been developed. That is the vacancy doctrine read forwards — the state owns what is not developed, and it gives away what will be. Forest exploitation came first and remained the largest European interest for decades; agricultural concessions followed. By the end of the 1920s, on the specialist account, European enterprises in Côte d’Ivoire were doing something almost unique in French West Africa: turning seriously to agricultural production, putting thousands of hectares under cultivation, the greater part in coffee. Verdier’s own Compagnie française de Kong, founded in June 1894, is the ancestral form of the arrangement — a trading house with a concession, named for a city its founder’s countrymen would occupy in ruins four years later.

And the corridor. The first blow of the pick on the Abidjan–Niger railway was struck in January 1904; the line reached Agboville in 1906, Dimbokro in September 1910, Bouaké in August 1912, then stopped for the war. The loan law of 22 January 1907 authorised French West Africa to borrow a hundred million francs, of which twenty-two millions were assigned to this colony, and the railway is where they went. The line's purpose was never in doubt: the administration chose Abidjan in 1903 as the starting point of a line running toward *le pays baoulé*, and the most serious obstruction it met was the Abé rising of 1910, fought along the track. When it resumed after the war it kept going north — Katiola in 1923, Ferkessédougou in 1929, Bobo-Dioulasso in 1934.

Follow the labour that built it, because the mechanism appears here first in miniature. The engineers recruited Kroumen from the west; on 1 December 1904 four hundred of them were repatriated and replaced by seven hundred workers brought from the Cavally *cercle*; fifty men from Bondoukou went home and two to three hundred came from the same region in their place; the government of Dahomey sent three to four hundred Nagots; and further gangs were expected from the *cercle* of Kong. Men were being moved across the map by administrative decision to build a line in 1904, and the movement was recorded as a supply problem.

A colony attached to a colony

Twenty-eight years later the same operation was performed on a colony.

The colony of Upper Volta had been created by decree of 1 March 1919 out of the old Haut-Sénégal–Niger. By a decree of 5 September 1932, published in the *Journal officiel* of 10 September, it was abolished and its territory distributed among

Niger, the French Soudan and Côte d’Ivoire. The decree does its work in the flattest administrative verb available:

> *Les cercles de Fada et de Dori (le canton d’Aribinda excepté) sont rattachés à la colonie du Niger ; le cercle de Ouahigouya, le canton d’Aribinda du cercle de Dori et [une] partie du cercle de Dédougou sont rattachés à la colonie du Soudan ; les cercles de Tenkodogo, Ouagadougou, Koudougou, Gaoua, Batié, Bobo-Dioulasso et la partie du cercle de Dédougou… sont rattachés à la colonie de la Côte d’Ivoire.*
>
> The *cercles* of Fada and Dori (the canton of Aribinda excepted) are attached to the colony of Niger; the *cercle* of Ouahigouya, the canton of Aribinda of the *cercle* of Dori and [a] part of the *cercle* of Dédougou are attached to the colony of the Soudan; the *cercles* of Tenkodogo, Ouagadougou, Koudougou, Gaoua, Batié, Bobo-Dioulasso and the part of the *cercle* of Dédougou… are attached to the colony of Côte d’Ivoire.

Rattachés. Attached. Côte d’Ivoire’s share was on the order of a hundred and fifty-three thousand square kilometres and, on the figure given in the reference literature, two million and eleven thousand nine hundred and sixteen inhabitants. The report recommending the decree to the President of the Republic was made by the Minister for the Colonies, Albert Sarraut — who nine years earlier had published the standard French statement of the doctrine of *mise en valeur*, the development of the colonies, and who now signed away a colony because it had not developed.

The reasons given at the time and by the historians since converge. Upper Volta was poor, its cotton economy had been broken by the world slump, and it cost more to administer than it returned; the neighbouring colonies wanted its labour. From 1937 the portion attached here was administered as the *Haute-Côte d’Ivoire*. Tens of thousands of workers moved south to the

plantations and the works of the forest belt over the following years, under arrangements that were formally voluntary and were not. Upper Volta was reconstituted by a law of 4 September 1947.

Set the two instruments beside each other, because they are the same instrument at different scales. The land decrees declared undeveloped ground vacant and vested it in the state, so that it could be granted to those who would develop it. The 1932 decree declared an undeveloped *colony* surplus and vested its population in the colonies that could use it. In both cases the legal act converts something that was a relation between persons — a lineage's ground, a territory's people — into something disposable, and in both cases the warrant is development. That is this collection's law-as-instrument mechanism operating at the largest scale it has yet been observed at: the object converted is not a parcel, not an office, but a country.

Two corrections to the record this study was working from. The decree is of **5** September 1932, not 3 September, and it was published on 10 September; and the Haute-Côte d'Ivoire administrative region dates from a decree of 13 July 1937 rather than 1938. Neither changes the argument; both should be right.

What was granted, and what was not

Start with the omission, because it is the largest fact in this colony and it was not a policy.

The usual mechanism of a colonial settlement is conversion. The conqueror turns a relation between persons — a man's standing in his lineage, his descent from those who cleared the ground — into a *thing* that can be granted: a parcel, a title, an entry in a register he keeps and a court he runs. The man may end up on the same fields he always farmed, but he now holds them from the conqueror, and he will defend the arrangement because the

arrangement is what makes his holding his. That is alignment without agreement, and it is the cheapest binding there is.

France asserted the claim here in the most sweeping terms available and then never did the work. Everything unregistered belonged to the state; customary groups had a right of use they could not dispose of without an administrative order; and the registry that would have converted African holdings into transferable things existed from 1906, was reorganised twice, and was scarcely used by Africans at all. The great compilations of custom that were meant to make African rights legible were never really made to work.

So the African cultivator was never granted anything, and was therefore never tied by having been granted anything. His title kept coming from where it had always come from — his lineage, his clearing, his village — under a legal roof that could in principle be swept away and in practice was never touched, because the machinery to touch it was never built. **Land the register never entered is land the register cannot take away.** That is the opposite of a settlement, and it happened because a state that wanted labour rather than ground had no reason to spend money surveying fields.

What Africans did receive was an office, and only an office. Where there had been village heads whom people did not much trouble to obey, there was now an appointed canton chief — policeman, judge, census-taker, tax-collector, overseer of cultivation — holding a position that existed because a French official had written it into being and would cease to exist when he stopped writing. Ask what such a man owes and the answer is administrative service; ask what he holds and the answer is the office itself. That buys compliance and produces a dependant, not an ally with a following of his own. If the arrangement ended tomorrow, he ended with it.

And then the third thing, which is the study's spine and which nobody chose. The test that separated a man's ground from the state's was *development*: land unexploited or unoccupied fell in. And the administration, wanting receipts while tropical prices were high, ordered cultivators to plant cocoa and propagated coffee among peasants. Cocoa is a tree. It takes years to bear and then bears for decades, and it cannot be lifted, sold across a frontier or carried on a head. An administration that defined vacancy by non-development and then compelled development had, by 1930, filled its forest belt with people holding land they had been ordered to plant, in a crop that was itself the most legible possible proof that the ground was not vacant.

Whether any cultivator reasoned from the decree to the seedling is unknown and is not claimed here. The structure stands without it, and it is harder than the comfortable version. This class was not an accident and it was not a gift. It was a by-product of the state's own instructions, issued for the state's own receipts, under a law too cheap to enforce.

The other instrument in this module performs the same operation on a different object. The land decrees declared undeveloped ground vacant and vested it in the state so that it could be given to those who would develop it. The decree of 5 September 1932 declared an undeveloped *colony* surplus and vested its people in the colonies that could use them: some hundred and fifty-three thousand square kilometres and two million inhabitants *rattachés* — attached — on a report to the President from the minister who had written the standard French statement of colonial development, and who now signed away a colony for failing to develop. The railway had been doing the same thing in miniature since 1904, moving gangs of men across the map by administrative decision and entering it in the file as a supply problem. What is converted is not a parcel and not an office. It is a country.

A note on sources.

Quoted exactly, from public-domain primary instruments. The decree of 15 November 1935 regulating domanial lands in Côte d'Ivoire is quoted from a published Ivorian compilation of domanial legislation reproducing its operative text, corroborated by two independent secondary reproductions of the same wording; the *Journal officiel de l'Afrique occidentale française* text has not been consulted directly and the passage is given as reproduced. The decree of 5 September 1932 suppressing the colony of Upper Volta is quoted from a Burkinabè reproduction of its distributive article, corroborated by the transcription maintained by the Digithèque des matériaux juridiques et politiques (Université de Perpignan), which cites *JORF*, 10 September 1932, p. 9927, and by the pleadings before the International Court of Justice in the Niger–Burkina Faso frontier case, which cite the same decree at *Journal officiel de l'Afrique occidentale française*, 15 October 1932, p. 902, and record that the report recommending its adoption was made to the President of the Republic by the Minister for the Colonies, Albert Sarraut. The spellings of the excepted canton differ between reproductions (Arbinda / Aribinda) and the bracketed words in the quoted passage mark where the reproductions differ in wording rather than substance.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship and reference literature. The chain of domanial and registration decrees — 20 July 1900, 23 October 1904, 24 July 1906, 8 October 1925, 26 July 1932, and the ending of the state's claim to vacant and masterless land by the decree of 20 May 1955 — and the finding that the 1904 and 1906 decrees had extremely marginal practical effect, that they vested all unregistered land in the state subject to a collective right of enjoyment exercisable by customary collectivities and the chiefs representing them, and that the *coutumiers* intended to record customary rights were never really made operational, follow the comparative land-tenure

literature published through the FAO's land-reform series and the Ivorian legal-historical literature. The creation of the canton chieftaincy wherever it had been absent, and the created chief's functions as policeman, judge, census-taker, tax-collector and overseer of cultivation, follow the West African administrative-history literature, including Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch's formulation of the chief's role, and the Ivorian local-government literature. The turn of European enterprise in this colony toward agricultural production on thousands of hectares, mostly coffee, and the administration's imposition of cocoa extension and the first coffee planting on Ivorian peasants, follow the study of colonial administration and commercial profit in Côte d'Ivoire during the crisis of 1930 published in *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer*. The railway chronology and the recorded movements of construction labour in 1904 follow the standard histories of the Abidjan–Niger line and the AOF railways.

Contested figures and soft points. The area attached to Côte d'Ivoire in 1932 is given as approximately 153,650 square kilometres and its population as 2,011,916 in the reference literature; the area figure is consistent across sources, the population figure rests on a colonial census whose methods this study has not examined and should be read as an administrative count rather than a demographic measurement. The number of canton chiefs in the colony is given in period statements as of the order of four hundred; the figure comes from a contemporary's testimony rather than from an administrative return and is given here as an order of magnitude. The scale of European agricultural concessions is given as "thousands of hectares" because that is what the specialist source states; a proper hectarage by year, and the corresponding African planted area, is not attempted here. This module has not established what proportion of African land in the forest belt was ever registered, only that the specialist literature describes registration as marginal; that proportion is load-bearing for the

argument and should be pinned down before any argument leans on it. The claim that the vacancy doctrine's development test and the administration's cultivation orders together produced the planter class is stated here as a structure, not as a demonstrated causal chain, and no cultivator's reasoning is attributed.

Part of the collection Patterns of Power. Tested, never revealed.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 3

PEACE, ORGANISATION, WEALTH

Module 3 · The Robe — the story laid over the floor, the audience it was cut for, and the governor who published four hundred pages to argue that the gentler version of it was immoral

The creed, in three words, over the best signature in France

The doctrine of this colony can be read in its finished form on the last line of the letter that opens its principal document. General Galliéni — of Tonkin and Madagascar, the most respected colonial soldier France possessed — wrote a preface for Angoulvant's *La Pacification de la Côte d'Ivoire*, and closed it thus:

> *Paix — Organisation — Richesse. — Ce sont les trois conditions essentielles du développement normal de toute colonie. Et c'est avec joie que la France voit la Côte d'Ivoire, sous votre active direction, réaliser ce programme.*
>
> Peace — Organisation — Wealth. These are the three essential conditions of the normal development of any colony. And it is with joy that France sees Côte d'Ivoire, under your active direction, realise this programme.

Three words, in that order, signed by that man, at the head of a volume whose later chapters catalogue the seizure of ten thousand firearms, the internment of chiefs under a decree

permitting ten years' deportation and the sequestration of their goods, war fines assessed on villages that had not fired a shot, and the destruction of two hundred and forty-seven encampments so that their inhabitants could be resettled in seventeen villages sited beside a road. Peace is the first of the three, and it is the name given in the preface to what the book describes.

That is not hypocrisy and reading it as hypocrisy will cost you the module. Galliéni means it, and he says why he means it in the same letter: for want of an initial conquest followed by a serious and complete occupation, France's installation on this coast had remained precarious, and the colony's progress and the exploitation of its wealth had been held back by the unproductivity of the regions closed to French activity. Angoulvant had signalled the situation, demanded the necessary troops, and a series of military operations in which the admirable colonial troops had spent themselves without counting had at last disarmed the rebel tribes. Peace, in that sentence, is a synonym for the completion of conquest. The word is doing exactly the work the pattern suggests a robe's words do: it takes an act of force and returns it to the reader as something natural, orderly and lawful.

And Galliéni adds the sentence that settles a question this study raised earlier and got wrong: he is *happy and proud*, he writes, to find again in West Africa **methods that are dear to him**, applied by old collaborators and friends. He is not the author of a gentler doctrine being repudiated by a harder man. He is claiming the work as his own school.

What the doctrine claimed

Reconstruct the belief, not the category. What did this order say about itself?

It said, first, that France's presence was a *mission civilisatrice*, and Angoulvant uses the term as a term of art rather than a flourish: to abandon the demands France made of the peoples of the forest would be, he writes, to consent to *une véritable abdication de notre mission civilisatrice et de nos droits* — a genuine abdication of our civilising mission and of our rights. Mission and rights in the same breath, the second following from the first.

It said, second, that the peoples under the floor stood at a lower stage, and that their condition was a fact about them rather than about the arrangement. The Landscape has already quoted the epigraph Angoulvant borrowed from Jules Harmand to open his first chapter, with its inferior tribes incapable of conceiving the public good beyond their village and its natives cut into a thousand pieces without ceasing to live. Angoulvant's own descriptions run in the same register — populations without organisation, living in full anarchy, given over to their worst instincts; a forest dweller whose taste for the bush expresses an inveterate leaning toward idleness. The ranking of persons is not implied. It is written down, and it is the load-bearing premise, because everything the order does to people follows from where the doctrine has placed them.

It said, third — and this is the sentence in which the whole robe is contained — that the belief and the force were **one operation**. In the foreword, anticipating a criticism, Angoulvant writes:

> *Peut-être s'étonnera-t-on que je n'aie point traité de la conquête morale du pays. Celle-ci s'est faite en même temps que la conquête par les armes. Elle se manifestait par la création de marchés, l'ouverture d'écoles et de dispensaires, la construction de routes, l'implantation de cultures nouvelles, le développement des plantations traditionnelles, l'assainissement des villes et villages, une mise en valeur plus intensive du pays, des conseils*

> *incessants donnés avec fermeté aux aborigènes afin de les amener peu à peu au bien-être matériel et à une vie morale plus haute et plus complète.*
>
> Perhaps it will be found surprising that I have not treated of the moral conquest of the country. It was accomplished at the same time as the conquest by arms. It manifested itself in the creation of markets, the opening of schools and dispensaries, the building of roads, the implantation of new crops, the development of traditional plantations, the sanitation of towns and villages, a more intensive development of the country, and incessant advice given firmly to the aborigines in order to bring them little by little to material well-being and to a higher and fuller moral life.

Every item in that list is an administrative act, and one of them — *l'implantation de cultures nouvelles*, the implantation of new crops — is the compelled planting the administration was imposing on peasants for its own receipts, entered here on the moral side of the ledger. The doctrine does not distinguish between conquest and improvement, because in its own terms there is nothing to distinguish. Roads, markets, dispensaries and the disarmament of the tribes that made them possible are one project with one name. *Conseils incessants donnés avec fermeté* — incessant advice given firmly — is what the *indigénat* looks like from the inside of the creed.

Whose belief was load-bearing

Now the question that organises everything: who was this addressed to?

Not the conquered. Angoulvant states their disposition as a fact of the situation, in his instructions of 26 November 1908, worth holding again: *nous ne sommes pas aimés* — we are not loved — and the mentality of the governed would have to be completely modified before the French could make themselves understood.

Fifteen years after the colony was declared, the administration's own report on the state of belief among the ruled is that there is none. The robe's downward leg had not taken, and the man responsible for it says so in an internal instruction while saying the opposite in a published foreword.

The audience is the metropole, and Angoulvant does not merely imply this. He anatomises it. Explaining why the doctrine of peaceful penetration commands such loyalty in France, he writes:

> *A n'en pas douter, la méthode que j'incrimine est bien faite pour séduire. Conception de notre humanitarisme souvent outrancier, elle répond dans son principe à notre idéal de peuple-apôtre, respectueux du droit d'autrui, désireux de répandre la civilisation par le seul prestige de celle-ci, soucieux de convaincre, ennemi de la force. Il n'est pas un Français qui ne lui accorde sa préférence. Elle suffirait à faire admettre la colonisation par ceux mêmes qui en sont les adversaires, parce qu'elle dispense cette dernière d'être oppressive pour ne lui laisser que son caractère libératrice, que sa fin éducatrice et économique.*
>
> Beyond doubt, the method I incriminate is well made to seduce. A conception of our often extravagant humanitarianism, it answers in its principle to our ideal of an apostle-people, respectful of the rights of others, desirous of spreading civilisation by its prestige alone, anxious to convince, an enemy of force. There is not a Frenchman who does not give it his preference. It would suffice to make colonisation acceptable even to those who are its adversaries, because it relieves colonisation of being oppressive and leaves it only its liberating character, its educative and economic end.

Read what that says. A serving governor, writing for publication, states that the gentle doctrine's function is to make colonisation acceptable to Frenchmen who would otherwise be against it —

and that no Frenchman fails to prefer it. He is describing the robe, its audience, and its purchase price, in a paragraph, from inside. And he pairs it immediately with the practitioners' side: outside the sincere or professional utopians, he writes, there is not a practising colonial who, if he is sincere, is not ready to recognise the absolute impossibility of getting French authority, French tutelage and their burdens benevolently accepted by the people they are imposed on.

Two sentences, one page apart. Every Frenchman prefers the doctrine. No practitioner believes it. That is the seam — the gap held open between what is said where the warrant is renewed and what is done where the cost is paid — described in its own colony's principal published source by the official responsible for the distance.

The robe named as a robe, without disillusion

Here the case does something this study would note, because it cuts against the natural expectation.

One would predict that a practitioner who sees through the metropolitan story would either keep quiet or become a cynic. Angoulvant does neither. He attacks the gentle doctrine — *c'est elle que je veux exposer, réfuter, combattre, extirper*, it is this I wish to expose, refute, combat, extirpate — and the ground of his attack is *moral*. Peaceful penetration, as commonly conceived and by the abusive extension made of it, is at once *improductive, trompeuse, instable, immorale et indélicate*: unproductive, deceptive, unstable, immoral and indelicate. It has done too much harm, he writes, provoked too many bereavements, caused too many material losses. The charge is that gentleness kills more people over more years than a decisive blow does, so that the humane doctrine is the murderous one.

He is not stepping out of the robe. He is contesting its cut. And the striking thing structurally is that both the doctrine he

attacks and the doctrine he proposes are addressed to the *same* audience — Paris — because the conquered were never an audience at all. The two competing legitimations of this colony are not a metropolitan story and a colonial reality. They are two metropolitan stories, both authored by colonials, fighting over which account of French virtue will fund and man the enterprise. And Angoulvant's honesty about the mechanism is itself a move in that fight: telling Frenchmen that the comfortable version is a self-deception is how you argue for the uncomfortable one.

There is one further tell, and it concerns timing. He explains in the foreword that he wrote the book as events unfolded but did not intend to publish until the results it recorded had undergone the test of time and could be affirmed. The war supplied the test: most of the troops withdrawn, nearly half the European personnel mobilised, the maximum personal tax raised from five francs to eight to balance a budget no longer subsidised — and no incident requiring the use of armed force, budgets in surplus, exports near normal, and thirteen thousand five hundred *tirailleurs* raised in sixteen months. *Je me crois par suite autorisé à publier aujourd'hui* — I believe myself accordingly authorised to publish today. He did not publish when he was right. He published when he could prove it to the people whose belief paid for him.

Forged, redirected, inherited

Three provenances for the trusted-information position, and this colony's answer is nearly forced by the Landscape.

Redirection was not available, or barely. The cheap move is to get behind a channel the people already trust and point that earned trust at yourself — the logic of indirect rule, cheap precisely because somebody else did the work of earning the trust. There was no such channel with territorial reach here: no imamate, no mandarinate, no throne with a tax machine beneath

it, and, in the forest, village heads whom, on the governor's own report, people did not often trouble to obey. What redirection was available at the margins France used, renting doorways from the Anyi kings and paying them *coutume* for it.

So France forged, and the forgery has already been named: the canton chieftaincy introduced wherever it had been absent, four hundred or so appointed men holding offices that existed because a French official had written them into being. A forged channel counterfeits the cues a mind is built to trust, and it is expensive, and a sharp vigilance catches the counterfeit. The governor's own instruction that his administration is not loved is the record of the counterfeit being caught.

And the robe France actually ran successfully was inherited — at home. This is the point that reorganises everything. The *mission civilisatrice* was not manufactured for Côte d'Ivoire. It long preceded the conquest of this territory, it was held sincerely by a French public that had never seen the place, and by this collection's own refinement a robe that precedes the conquest functions as a **filter** rather than a cover: it does not merely dress what is done, it *selects what can be funded and said*. That is precisely the constraint Angoulvant is fighting. He is not a man free to do as he likes and lying about it afterwards. He is a man whose budget, reinforcements and career all pass through an audience that genuinely believes something he thinks is false, and his four hundred pages are the brief he files to get the filter moved.

Which is the postscript's point about the lever and the leash being the same rope, seen from the colonial end. A belief that is real in the audience is a constraint on the performers, and the distance is what makes the performance survivable. Whether Angoulvant privately believed in the moral conquest is undecidable and does not matter: the observable fact is that he judged it necessary to claim one, in the foreword, to readers he

had just told would prefer the gentle version — which tells you the belief was live enough to require tending.

Two doctrines, both facing home

The thing to notice about this colony's official story is not that it was false. It is who it was told to.

The people under the floor were not its audience and were never treated as one. The governor's own instruction of November 1908 records the state of belief among the governed with no embarrassment at all: they do not love us, and their minds would have to be wholly remade before we could be understood. Fifteen years after the colony was declared, the man responsible for its moral conquest reports internally that there is none, while announcing in print that it was accomplished alongside the conquest by arms.

So the argument about what France was doing here took place entirely in France, and both sides of it were colonial. On one side the doctrine of peaceful penetration, which Angoulvant describes with unusual precision as answering to the French ideal of an apostle-people and as a thing no Frenchman fails to prefer — enough, he says, to make colonisation acceptable to those who would otherwise oppose it, because it relieves the enterprise of being oppressive and leaves it only its liberating and educative character. On the other side his own doctrine of the strong manner, argued on the ground that gentleness is the murderous option: unproductive, deceptive, unstable, immoral and indelicate, having caused too many bereavements and too many losses. Two accounts of French virtue, fighting for the same congregation, in a country whose inhabitants were not consulted about either.

That is what it looks like when a conquering order gives up on being believed by the people it conquered. The story does not disappear. It relocates, entirely, to the place where the money

and the men come from — and it becomes the practitioners' battlefield rather than the ruled population's.

Which changes what the story is *for*. A creed invented after a conquest dresses what has already been done. A creed that was in the country before the conquest — and the civilising mission long preceded this territory — does something harder: it decides in advance which acts can be funded and which can be said out loud. Angoulvant is not a free man lying about his work afterwards. He is a man whose budget, reinforcements and career all run through readers who sincerely believe something he thinks is false, and his book is the brief he files to get them to stop. He says as much about its timing. He wrote as events unfolded and held it back until the results could survive examination, and then named the test he had waited for: quiet under wartime withdrawal, a balanced budget, and thirteen thousand five hundred recruits raised in sixteen months. He did not publish when he was right. He published when he could prove it to the people who paid for him.

Whether he privately believed in the moral conquest cannot be recovered and does not matter. What can be observed is that he thought it necessary to claim one — in a foreword, to readers he had just told would prefer the gentler version. A story only needs tending where somebody still holds it.

And the last thing this record shows is what an order does when its story fails downward. It does not necessarily collapse and it does not necessarily spend more on soldiers. The same foreword that claims a moral conquest reports thirteen thousand five hundred men raised for the French army in sixteen months from a population whose mind the governor had said would have to be wholly remade. Belief and wages buy the same compliance. Where the first does not arrive, an order with a payroll need not wait for it.

What the payroll cannot buy is the thing a story that takes gives away free: people who hold the arrangement up because they think it right, rather than while the payments continue.

A note on sources.

Quoted exactly, from public-domain primary sources. All quotations in this module are from Gabriel Angoulvant, *La Pacification de la Côte d'Ivoire, 1908–1915: Méthodes et Résultats* (Paris, Larose, 1916), consulted in the Internet Archive's scan of that edition: General Galliéni's preface, including the closing formula *Paix — Organisation — Richesse* and his statement of finding again in West Africa methods dear to him; Angoulvant's foreword, including the passage on the moral conquest, the account of the wartime test, the raising of the maximum personal tax from five to eight francs, the figure of thirteen thousand five hundred *tirailleurs*, and the declaration that he believed himself authorised to publish; and from the body of the work the passages on the abdication of the civilising mission, on peaceful penetration as unproductive, deceptive, unstable, immoral and indelicate, on his intention to expose, refute, combat and extirpate it, on the apostle-people and the preference of every Frenchman, and on the practising colonial's recognition that French authority could not be got accepted benevolently. The instruction of 26 November 1908 is quoted from Angoulvant's own summary of it in the same volume.

A dating problem, stated rather than resolved. The scan renders the date of Galliéni's preface as "Paris, le 19 février 1910." That year cannot be right: the preface refers to the war, quotes Angoulvant on recruitment running to the end of January 1916, and prefaces a book published in 1916 whose foreword Angoulvant signs at Bingerville in March 1916. The year is almost certainly a misreading of 1916 by the optical character recognition, and this module treats the preface as of February

1916 while flagging that the printed original has not been inspected. One further figure in the foreword — a sum in francs subscribed by Europeans and Africans to wartime funds — is rendered by the scan as an unreadable string and is omitted.

The scan generally. As noted elsewhere in this study, the Internet Archive text is optical character recognition of a century-old printing and contains errors. Punctuation has been normalised where the scan is plainly broken; no word has been supplied that is not in the scan; one evident scanning slip in the passage on the apostle-people, where the text gives an adjectival form inconsistent with its noun, has been left as the scan has it rather than silently corrected. Readers checking these passages against the printed 1916 edition may find minor divergences of accent and punctuation, and this study would welcome the correction.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship. Nothing in this module rests on modern scholarship except the general characterisation of the *mission civilisatrice* and of the association doctrine in French West Africa, which follows the standard literature; the specific content of the doctrine as claimed here is taken from the primary text throughout. Jules Harmand’s standing as the principal French theorist of association, and the relation of his *Domination et colonisation* (1910) to the passage Angoulvant borrows as his epigraph, follow the standard accounts; Harmand’s book itself has not been consulted for this module and no claim is made here about its wider argument.

Soft points. This module establishes what the doctrine claimed and whom it addressed; it does not establish how far the metropolitan public actually held it, which would require the French press and the parliamentary record. Angoulvant’s characterisation of French opinion is a colonial administrator’s account of his own audience and is used here as evidence of what he believed he faced, not as a measurement of French belief. The claim that the canton chieftaincy constituted a forged rather than redirected information channel rests on this study’s

findings about the absence of seizable authority and on the governor’s own report that his administration was not loved; it has not been tested against evidence of what the governed actually believed, which the colonial record is poorly placed to supply and which should be treated as a standing limitation of this study rather than a gap in this module alone.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 4

THE TEACHERS WHO DID NOT COME

Module 4 · Formation — what the order asked of a good subject, how narrow the ladder was, what filled the field it left empty, and what happened when a hundred thousand people were formed in eighteen months by somebody else

What a good subject was asked to be

Installing a belief in each generation is the cheap half of ruling. An order that installs its belief in each generation gets obedience for nothing, because the governed hold it up themselves and the force can withdraw to the margins. An order that does not install it must pay in force for ever. This order's belief was never installed downward at all — *nous ne sommes pas aimés*, in the governor's own instruction of November 1908, fifteen years after the colony was declared. This module asks what was offered instead, and what came into the space.

Begin with the portrait, because the doctrine did specify one. From Angoulvant's foreword, and from the reports of every administrator working under him, the good subject of this colony is legible in a short list of behaviours: he lives in a village and not in a bush encampment; the village sits near a road, its houses of a uniform type, well aligned; he holds no firearm; he pays his tax in francs; he furnishes his days of labour when the *cercle* requires them; he plants what he is told to plant; he does not drink to excess; and he receives, in the doctrine's own phrase, *des conseils incessants donnés avec fermeté* — incessant

advice given firmly — intended to bring him little by little to material well-being and a higher moral life.

Notice what is absent from that list. There is no creed in it. Nothing in it requires him to believe anything. Every item is a behaviour observable by an official standing in front of him, and every item is enforceable by the *indigénat* — the administrative penal regime under which a *sujet* could be punished by the commandant's decision without trial. The portrait of the good subject in this colony is a compliance schedule, not a catechism. That is the first finding, and it follows directly: an order that has not addressed a belief to its subjects has nothing to install in them, so what it installs instead is the knowledge of what will be checked.

The ladder, and how wide it was

There was a ladder, and its dimensions are the module's hardest evidence.

The federal instrument was the *arrêté* no. 806 of 24 November 1903, signed at Saint-Louis, which created and organised education across French West Africa and gave birth to the teachers' normal school that would in 1915 take the name of the recently dead governor-general and become the École normale William Ponty. It began as a section of the school for chiefs' sons and interpreters, moved to Gorée in 1913 and to Sébikhotane in 1937, and it was the summit of the African educational system for the whole federation — teachers, clerks, administrative auxiliaries, and, through the Dakar medical school, the *médecins africains* who were the highest professional grade a colonial subject could reach.

Across its entire existence, for eight territories and some fifteen to twenty million people, Ponty produced on the order of **two thousand graduates**. That is the capped ladder as a number, and no adjective improves on it.

Beneath the summit the base was correspondingly thin. The colonial statistical annuaires show the number of schools and pupils in Côte d'Ivoire remaining well below what other territories of the federation recorded through the interwar years. Secondary education was not established in the colony until the end of the 1940s; before that an Ivorian who wanted a *lycée* had to go to Dakar. By the 1950s — after the post-war push, and therefore at the system's most generous — the colony counted upwards of twenty-five thousand pupils in public primary education and upwards of ten thousand in private schools run mainly by the Catholic missions, with girls making up something like fifteen per cent of the public enrolment and ten per cent of the private.

Thirty-five thousand children in school, at the end of the colonial period, in a territory whose population was then counted in millions. This study will not convert that into a schooling rate, because the denominators available are colonial census figures whose construction it has not examined, and a precise-looking percentage built on them would be a false precision. The order of magnitude is not in doubt and does not need decoration: a small minority of one cohort, in the best year, sixty years after the flag went up. The judgement of the specialist literature on French West Africa as a whole is that outside the towns illiteracy remained essentially untouched.

One further detail belongs here because it shows the ladder's gatekeeping working in the open. The first group of Ivorian pupils sent to complete their schooling at *lycée* in France went in 1946, in an operation organised by the territory's newly elected African deputy with the support of the governor and against, on the standard account, strong reluctance from the colonial administration. The ladder did not widen by itself. It had to be prised, by a man who had climbed it, using a political office the metropole had just created.

The field left open, and who was standing in it

If a conqueror does not form a population, somebody else has already formed it and continues to.

In the north, the Dyula towns had been centres of Islamic learning for centuries — Kong and Bouna both — and the Qur’anic school was the ordinary institution of instruction, catching the child young, teaching a script, a law and a calendar, and reproducing them without reference to any French budget. That is the recursion the Landscape established: a former conquest’s formation, so completely naturalised that by the twentieth century it simply was the world of the people in it, and running at no cost to anyone because it ran on conviction.

In the south, the Catholic missions — the Society of African Missions had been on this coast since the 1890s — provided a second channel, and by the 1950s were carrying nearly a third of the colony’s total enrolment. Missions form, which is what they are for; they were not part of the administration and their purposes were their own; and the state was content to let them carry a load it did not wish to fund.

And everywhere the older cycles kept scoring the year. Which brings up the calendar, and an awkwardness this study would notice.

The question to ask is for the ritual year that rehearsed the order, and in this colony the conqueror supplied none. There was no colonial liturgy for the Ivorian villager, no festival that installed his place, no annual occasion at which the order presented itself to him as rightful. What scored his year in the colonial register was a sequence of demands: the tax round, when the head tax fell due in francs he had to obtain by selling something or working for someone; the labour requisition; the census; the delivery of the crop he had been ordered to plant;

and, in wartime, the recruitment levy. Beside that ran the year he had always had — the agricultural rites, the Akan yam festival, the Muslim calendar in the north, the life-cycle rites of his lineage — which belonged to the former conquest and not to this one.

So the colonial year was a **collection calendar rather than a liturgical one**. It rehearsed the order thoroughly, and what it rehearsed was the floor. Every occasion on which the arrangement appeared in a villager's year was an occasion on which something was taken. That is a finding about the cost column disguised as a finding about formation, and it is worth stating as such: where formation is withheld, the conqueror's calendar does not vanish, it changes register — from a cycle that fills the benefit column to a cycle that demonstrates the cost column, and the population learns the timetable of the enforcer instead of the story of the order.

Eighteen months

Then, in September 1913, a man walked east out of Liberia along the beach and demonstrated in a year and a half what the field had been holding.

William Wadé Harris was a Grebo of Cape Palmas — Kru-speaking, from the same language cluster as the peoples of this colony's own west — raised in a Methodist minister's household, a sailor, a bricklayer, an Episcopalian catechist and schoolmaster, dismissed from a Liberian government interpreter's post and imprisoned after a political quarrel, and in prison, around 1910, visited by a vision in which the archangel Gabriel commissioned him to preach. He entered Côte d'Ivoire from the west in September 1913, walked the lagoon country in a white robe carrying a bamboo cross, a Bible, a gourd rattle and a bowl of water, and told people to burn their fetishes, be

baptised, keep the sabbath, build a church, abstain from alcohol, and wait for the teachers who would come with the book.

He was in the colony from September 1913 to January 1914, and again from August 1914 to January 1915. In something under eighteen months of preaching, the number of converts is given across the sources as **over a hundred thousand and commonly around a hundred and twenty thousand**, with more than half of his total conversions falling inside this territory; a later count put the movement at some two hundred thousand adherents in the mid-1920s against a colonial population estimate of about one and a half million. Every figure here is an estimate from a period of no reliable enumeration, and they should be read as a magnitude rather than a measurement. The magnitude is the point. It is the largest mass movement toward Christianity West Africa had seen, and it was performed by one unarmed man on foot at no cost whatever to the French treasury.

The administration's first reaction was approval, and the reason is precisely the one this module has been building toward. Harris preached submission to the authorities under God's law. He denounced drunkenness. He told people to work their fields or take paid employment. Set that beside the portrait of the good subject at the top of this module and the overlap is close to exact: he was producing, free, in villages the administration had spent twenty years failing to enter, the sober, orderly, working subject that Angoulvant's *conquête morale* had claimed as its own achievement. When the Society of African Missions procured his arrest for preaching without authorisation, the lieutenant-governor, on discovering what he was actually producing, released him.

Then they arrested him again, imprisoned and beat him and the women travelling with him, expelled him to Liberia — the deportation decided in January 1915, though some accounts place the removal later in that year and at least one places the

expulsion in 1914 — and destroyed the churches his converts had built.

Why they removed a man who was doing their work

This is the hinge, and the explanation is not in what he said.

Nothing about Harris's *content* threatened the order. On the contrary: the content was the order's own doctrine, delivered more effectively than the order had ever managed to deliver it. What threatened the order was that the content arrived through a channel France did not own. The position of trusted interpreter in this colony had to be **forged**, because there was no self-running authority to redirect and no seizable apex to inherit — and that the forgery, several hundred appointed canton chiefs holding offices invented by *cercle* officers, was expensive and had not taken. Harris did in eighteen months what the forgery had failed to do in twenty years, and he did it on his own warrant.

A forged channel cannot tolerate a rival channel, however congenial the rival's message, because the whole value of the forgery is exclusivity. What Harris did was **crowd** the position, and the administration's response — arrest, beating, deportation, demolition — is a seam being recaptured. That the recapture was procured with the assistance of a missionary society, and that the persecution of Harris's converts afterwards was often conducted with the same assistance, is the same mechanism seen from the other side: a channel already inside the tent removing one that was not.

And now the legitimacy-determination event the question to ask is for — the moment when the authorities test the belief by striking at its bearer, and the historian watches what the base population actually does.

They kept it. The prophet was gone, the churches were pulled down, the teachers he had promised did not come, and the converts held the faith without any of them. When British Methodists arrived in the mid-1920s they found the fruits of a mission nobody had run for nine years: congregations still meeting, still keeping the sabbath, still waiting. When the mission churches then demanded that Harris's converts be catechised properly and baptised again before they could be received, the great majority declined — many of them holding, reasonably enough, that a rite of passage happens once — and constituted themselves instead as the Harrist Church, which exists today.

Read the arithmetic. A population that the colonial administration had described as unloving, unformed and requiring the complete modification of its mentality proved, when a formation was offered it in a language and by a man it recognised, to take that formation in eighteen months, hold it under persecution for nine years without clergy or texts, and then refuse to surrender it to the missionaries who came to collect it. The material was not the problem. The offer was.

What was withheld, and why

The natural reading of a colony that builds almost no schools is that schooling was a cost declined — that forming a population is expensive, that forming it would eventually mean admitting it, and that a cheap administration therefore did without. It is a tidy explanation and this colony refutes it outright.

France was offered a formation, free, and destroyed it.

Everything Harris preached was what the administration said it wanted. Submission to the authorities under God's law. Sobriety. Work your fields or take paid employment. Set that beside the good subject the doctrine described — living in a village near a road, paying his tax, furnishing his labour, planting what he was

told, not drinking — and the overlap is close to exact. He was producing, at no charge, in villages the administration had spent twenty years failing to enter, the very man the whole apparatus existed to manufacture. The lieutenant-governor discovered as much and released him from his first arrest on precisely that ground.

Then they arrested him again, beat him, deported him and pulled down the churches.

So what was withheld was not the expense. It was permission for the population to be formed by anybody else. That is not economy; it is a claim to a monopoly — and a monopoly claimed by an order that could not fill the position itself, since its own channel to the villages was several hundred appointed chiefs holding offices invented by *cercle* officers, and its own governor recorded that it was not loved. Harris crowded a position France held and could not occupy, which is the only offence that mattered and had nothing to do with what he said.

The consequence is a prediction about everything that follows: an order guarding an interpretive position it cannot fill will treat every independent channel as one category of threat regardless of content, and will answer by capture or removal rather than by argument. A prophet in 1915, a planters' syndicate, a party — the response should be expected to rhyme.

Then there is what the population did, which is the plainest evidence in this study of anything Africans in this colony actually believed. The state removed the man, demolished the buildings, and the teachers he had promised never came. The converts held it for nine years with no clergy and no texts, until British Methodists stumbled into congregations still keeping the sabbath and still waiting. And when the missions required them to be catechised properly and baptised again before being received, most declined, and constituted a church of their own that exists today. A people the administration had described as

requiring the complete remaking of its mind took a formation in eighteen months, kept it under persecution for nine years, and refused to hand it to the missionaries who came to collect it. The material was never the difficulty. The offer was.

One last thing, about the year. There was no colonial festival for an Ivorian villager, no annual occasion at which the arrangement presented itself to him as rightful, nothing that installed his place. What scored his year in the French register was a sequence of demands: the tax falling due in francs, the labour requisition, the census, the delivery of the crop he had been ordered to plant, and in wartime the recruitment levy. Alongside it ran the year he had always had — the agricultural rites, the yam festival, the Muslim calendar in the north — which belonged to older conquests and not to this one. A calendar made entirely of collections rehearses an order thoroughly, and what it rehearses is the enforcer’s timetable. It teaches a man to predict exactly when someone will come and what will be wanted. It teaches him nothing else, which is why the compliance it produces ends the moment the rounds do.

A note on sources.

Quoted exactly, from public-domain primary sources. The description of the good subject is assembled from Angoulvant’s *La Pacification de la Côte d’Ivoire* (Paris, Larose, 1916), — the passages on village regrouping and alignment, on disarmament, on the moral conquest, and on incessant advice given firmly. The founding instrument of federal education in French West Africa is cited as *arrêté* no. 806 of 24 November 1903; this study has not inspected its text, and notes a discrepancy in the sources over its signatory, which Senegalese scholarship gives as Governor-General Ernest Roume and at least one English-language reference gives as Jean-Baptiste Chaudié. The point is

unresolved here and the instrument is cited by number and date only.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship and reference literature. The history of the École normale William Ponty — its foundation as a section of the school for chiefs' sons and interpreters, its transfers to Gorée in 1913 and Sébikhotane in 1937, its renaming after Ponty's death in 1915, and its total output of upwards of two thousand graduates — follows the standard Senegalese and French scholarship on the school, including the work of Peggy Sabatier and Jean-Hervé Jézéquel and the Senegalese historical literature. The Ivorian enrolment figures for the 1950s, the absence of secondary provision in the colony before the late 1940s, and the sex ratios in public and private schooling follow the summary of the colonial statistical annuaires in the Francophone reference literature on colonial education in Côte d'Ivoire. The judgement that illiteracy remained essentially untouched outside the towns follows Abdou Moumouni's study of education in Africa. The biography and itinerary of William Wadé Harris, the sequence of his arrests, his expulsion and the destruction of the churches, the intervention of the Society of African Missions, the lieutenant-governor's initial release of him on discovering the character of his preaching, the later discovery of his congregations by British Methodists, and the formation of the Harrist Church out of converts who refused rebaptism, follow the Dictionary of African Christian Biography, Gordon Haliburton's *The Prophet Harris* and Sheila Walker's *The Religious Revolution in the Ivory Coast*, together with the standard reference literature. The presence of the Society of African Missions on this coast from the 1890s, and the Islamic scholarly institutions of Kong and Bouna, follow the sources cited in the opening survey of this study.

Contested figures, given as ranges. Harris's converts in this territory are given variously as over one hundred thousand and as approximately one hundred and twenty thousand, with a

mid-1920s movement membership estimated at around two hundred thousand against a colonial population estimate of roughly one and a half million; all are estimates made in the absence of reliable enumeration. The date of his expulsion is contested: the deportation appears to have been decided in January 1915, some accounts place the removal later in 1915, and at least one reference work gives 1914. His birth year is given variously as about 1850, about 1860 and 1865. The Ivorian enrolment figures of the 1950s are given as “upwards of” the stated numbers because the sources report them that way.

Figures deliberately not calculated. This module declines to state a schooling rate. The pupil numbers are reasonably firm; the population denominators are colonial census figures whose construction this study has not examined, and the school-age fraction of that population is not established. A percentage built on those inputs would look far more precise than the evidence supports. The comparison with Guinea’s *évolué* stratum, which the study’s design requires, is explicitly left open here: Guinea has not been measured on the same basis, and the comparison should be made at the close of this study with both sides counted the same way, or not made at all.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 5

WHAT A MAN COULD NOT CARRY

Module 5 · The Cost Column — why this cultivator complied when the border was walkable, what the punishments were actually for, and a colony that answered its leak by importing replacements

The apparatus that priced defection

This module asks one question and it is not about the administration's budget. It asks why an individual cultivator in a village in this colony, in a given year, did what he was told. The cost column is his, not the governor's, and it is full or empty according to whether a credible enforcer could reach him and he knew it.

The enforcer had a name and a legal form. The *indigénat* — the administrative penal regime applying to *sujets*, established for French West Africa by decrees of 30 September 1887 and 21 November 1904 — allowed the *commandant de cercle* to punish, without contradictory procedure and without appeal that could arrive in time to matter, a list of infractions special to natives which ordinary law did not punish at all. The headings ran to several dozen and were later reduced; they covered hygiene and building regulations, and above all the acts by which a subject might decline the arrangement: refusing to assist the authorities, disrespect toward an administrator, refusal of work, refusal of tax, calling a strike, failing to answer a summons. The tariff was a fine and up to fifteen days' imprisonment, **executed immediately**. The statute required the governor's signature on

every punishment; in practice it was obtained afterwards. The same decrees provided for internment up to ten years, with sequestration of goods, for acts of insurrection against the authority of France, serious political disturbances, or manoeuvres capable of compromising public security — the power under which rebel chiefs were deported to Port-Étienne in Mauritania.

Below the commandant stood the *gardes-cercles*, the first rung of the apparatus and the rung an ordinary villager actually met. The testimony gathered by historians of the regime remembers them for routine violence — flogging, public humiliation — and records that commandants themselves applied corporal punishments alongside or instead of the legal penalties, including holding a man in a painful sitting position for a set period, or until the wrong was repaired: until, for instance, the tax was paid.

And beside them the canton chief — appointed, revocable, interested in the tax and the labour draft because his own share came out of them. He was the point at which the whole apparatus reached the individual, and he was, until 1924, himself subject to the *indigénat*.

Was the force credible? Surveillance is the tell of a belief that never took, and the answer is written into the structure. The armed floor here was thin in numbers, but its penal reach was continuous and local, and it did not depend on soldiers. It depended on a man in the village who could have you fined and jailed for a fortnight this afternoon.

What the punishments were actually for

The record is unusually clear about the content of the enforcement, and it is not what the colony’s published doctrine would suggest.

The historian of the *indigénat* who has counted the punishments finds that the majority of penalties pronounced by administrators sanctioned **fiscal infractions**. Not sedition, not insolence: tax. The apparatus of summary justice existed, in the main, to make people pay.

The Ivorian record supplies the texture, and it supplies it through the complaints of the French legal service, which is a useful accident: the *parquet* was auditing the administration and its files therefore record what the administration did rather than what it said. The chief of the political affairs bureau of French West Africa noted that in the colony of Côte d'Ivoire the evident principle that the 1887 decree applied only to limited cases was simply not applied. The administrator of the Kong *cercle* fined several men a hundred francs and jailed them for fifteen days for refusing to furnish materials and for having the roads watched — punishments no local *arrêté* provided for. The administrator at Grand-Bassam used disciplinary sanctions for theft, breach of trust and assault; the administrator of Assinie for a matter of breach of trust that belonged to the native courts; the post commandant at Séguéla for attempted murder and for the sale and theft of captives, none of which was his to hear. The Procureur général's summary of the colony was confusion and imprecision as the rule.

And then the detail that belongs at the centre of this module. In one *cercle*, in 1903, the administrator convened the native tribunal forty-two times and resorted to his own disciplinary powers only twice — using native justice as the *more severe* instrument, because the native tribunal could give a month where his own hand gave fifteen days. What did it give a month for? **The flight of porters and the abandonment of a load.** Systematically. The Procureur général thought the sentences excessive given the nature of the infractions.

That is the cost column in one line. A man carrying somebody else's goods on his head, who put them down and walked away,

got a month in prison, and the sentence was handed down by a tribunal wearing African clothes. The order's harshest routine penalty was for leaving.

The door that was open

Which raises the study's hardest question for this case: why did he not simply leave for good?

Because he could, and this is where Côte d'Ivoire departs from most of the cases in this collection. The British Gold Coast lay immediately east, along a border that ran through peoples who lived on both sides of it — Anyi and Abron and Nzima had kin across the line, drawn in the 1890s through the middle of their own countries. Liberia lay to the south-west, across a border equally notional to the Kru-speaking peoples of both sides. And people used both.

The scholarship on what one strand of it calls the right of flight treats this movement as a form of resistance in its own right: individual desertion from public-works sites, and collective crossing of frontiers to take refuge in a neighbouring colony. The recorded episodes are concrete. A demand for ten thousand workers presented in the Mossi country in 1918 produced flight to the Gold Coast. A *cercle* commandant estimated twelve hundred young men gone in 1924, and a thousand to fifteen hundred in 1926. And the destination was not chosen at random: men fleeing French compulsion went to work for British enterprises, on British sites and plantations, because the wages and conditions there were markedly better.

Two consequences follow, and both are structural.

The first is that the administration could not count the people who left, because they avoided the frontier posts. That mattered far more than it sounds. The census was the transmission belt of the whole arrangement — it fixed who owed tax, who was liable

to the labour draft, and who could be conscripted — so a man who vanished across a border did not merely remove his own body. He corrupted the register, and the register was the instrument. Exodus, in the words of the specialist literature, affected the budgetary equilibrium of the colony directly.

The second is that an open exit door should have driven extraction *down*. Where every door is shut the floor sinks toward the bone; where a door is open the extractor must keep his demand below the value of walking through it. This colony's demand did not come down. So either the general rule is wrong here, or something else was holding the ledger — and the answer, on the evidence, is that the door was not equally open to everyone, and that the administration found a way to stop caring how many people used it.

A colony that answered its leak with a decree

The way it stopped caring was the decree of 1932, read now from the subject's side rather than the instrument's.

When the colony of Upper Volta was abolished on 5 September 1932 and the greater part of it attached to Côte d'Ivoire, the administration acquired something no amount of policing could have given it: a catchment. The governor of the period drove what the specialist literature calls a voluntarist policy of peopling the forested south with the populations of the north, and the machinery included *villages de colonisation voltaïque* — Voltaic settlement villages — established in the Gouro country to hold seasonal migrants and to seed permanent settlement. In a letter to the governor-general in 1933 the governor estimated the needs of the next five years at fifty thousand workers for cocoa and as many again for coffee, bananas and the other export crops.

A hundred thousand men, requested in a letter.

Set that beside the leak and the arithmetic of the cost column changes shape. An administration that cannot stop its subjects walking east has two options: raise the cost of walking, or replace the walkers. Raising the cost had been tried — a month in prison for a dropped load — and had not worked, because the border was long and unwatchable and the wages on the other side were better. Replacement worked, and it required no policemen at all. It required a decree.

And the record contains the measurement that makes the point unanswerable. The flow of Voltaic labour into Côte d’Ivoire under compulsion never reached what the same flow reached once compulsion ended: the peak of fifty-one thousand migrants was recorded in **1951, five years after obligatory labour was abolished by the law of 11 April 1946**, while in the compulsion years the parallel flow to the Gold Coast was already running at tens of thousands annually of its own accord. Forced recruitment moved fewer men to this colony than wages moved afterwards. The compulsion was not even efficient at the thing it existed to do.

What a man could not carry

Now the module’s finding, which requires the study’s exit dial to be split in two.

The question to ask is whether there is an exit, as though exit were a property of the territory: a door open or shut, one setting for everybody under the floor. In this colony the door was open, and yet the ledger did not come out the same way for every man, because **exit is not a property of the border. It is a property of what a man owns that he cannot take with him.**

Consider the three positions the arrangement had produced by the 1930s.

A young man of the north, liable to the labour draft, holding a share in his lineage's land four hundred miles from the forest and nothing else, could walk to the Gold Coast in a fortnight and be paid better at the end of it. His cost column was genuinely low, and he emptied it in the thousands, and the *cercle* commandants counted the gaps in their registers.

A porter on a public-works site, holding nothing at all, could put down the load and go — for which the reason he was given a month in prison rather than fifteen days becomes obvious. He was the man most able to leave, so he was the man most heavily priced.

And a cultivator of the forest belt who had planted cocoa or coffee under the administration's own orders, was in a wholly different position, and not because anyone had made him one. A cocoa tree takes years to bear. It cannot be lifted, sold across a frontier, or carried on a head. The man who owns one has, by the simple fact of owning it, accepted a cost column that a man with a hoe and a food crop does not have: everything he has spent is in the ground, and the ground is inside the arrangement. His exit dial reads shut, and it was shut not by a garrison but by a tree.

This is where the module's earlier puzzle resolves. Extraction did not fall to meet the open door because the people best able to use the door were not the people the arrangement most needed to hold. It needed labour, and labour it replaced by decree. What it needed to *hold* was the planted forest belt, and the forest belt held itself.

And the selection ran the other way too, which is the part still running at the end of this story. A policy that moves propertyless men south to work land they do not own, while the men who own the land are those who planted it, is a policy that sorts a population into two permanent categories by their relation to the soil. Nobody designed that. The administration

wanted workers and wrote for a hundred thousand. But the cost column it built had two different readings in the same colony — carriable and uncarriable — and the line between them ran, by 1946, roughly between the people who had come and the people who had been there.

What held him

The usual question about a conquered population is why it does not simply leave, and the usual answer is that it cannot. Here it could. The Gold Coast was a fortnight's walk east across a border drawn through the middle of peoples who lived on both sides of it; Liberia lay south-west across another; the wages on the far side were better, and thousands went. A demand for ten thousand workers in the Mossi country in 1918 produced flight; a *cercle* commandant reckoned twelve hundred young men gone in one year and up to fifteen hundred in another; and the administration admitted it could not count them, because they avoided the frontier posts.

By every ordinary expectation an open door of that kind should have driven the demand down. An extractor whose subjects can walk away has to keep his levy below the value of walking. This colony's levy did not come down for four decades.

The reason is that the door was not equally open, and what varied was not the border but what a man owned.

A young northerner liable to the draft, with a share in his lineage's land four hundred miles away and nothing else, could go and be better paid at the end of it. A porter on a public-works site, holding nothing at all, could put the load down and walk — which is exactly why he was the most heavily priced man in the colony. In one *cercle* in 1903 the administrator convened the native tribunal forty-two times and used his own summary power twice, because the tribunal could give a month where his own hand gave fifteen days; and what it systematically gave a month

for was the flight of porters and the abandonment of a load. The harshest routine penalty in the arrangement was for leaving, and it was pronounced by a court wearing African clothes.

And a cultivator of the forest belt who had planted cocoa or coffee, under the orders that Module's own administration had issued for its receipts, was in a different position altogether — not because anyone had put him there. A cocoa tree takes years to bear. It cannot be lifted, sold across a frontier, or carried on a head. Everything he had spent was in the ground and the ground was inside the arrangement. His door was shut by a tree, and no garrison was required.

So a man's ability to leave was a fact about his property, not about his country. The fastest way to close a border on a population is not to guard it. It is to get them to plant something.

Two consequences follow and both outlast the colony.

The first is that flight attacked the register rather than the garrison, and the register was the instrument. The census fixed who owed tax, who was liable to the draft and who could be conscripted; a man who vanished did not merely remove his body, he corrupted the count. Which explains what the summary penal regime was actually used for: on the historians' tally the majority of punishments administrators pronounced enforced fiscal obligations. The surveillance in an order like this one is not principally watching for sedition. It is counting.

The second is that the administration, unable to stop men walking east, stopped needing to. It abolished a colony and attached two million people to this one; a governor wrote to his superior in 1933 asking for fifty thousand workers for cocoa and as many again for the other export crops, and villages were founded in the Gouro country to hold the migrants. And here the record supplies the measurement that settles what the compulsion was for. The flow of northern labour into this colony under compulsion never matched what the same flow reached

once compulsion ended: the peak of fifty-one thousand came in 1951, five years after forced labour was abolished, while the Gold Coast had been drawing comparable numbers voluntarily throughout. Coercion delivered fewer men than wages did.

Which means it cannot be explained as a solution to a labour shortage. What it did efficiently was deliver workers to a designated class of employers who did not have to bid for them. That is a fact about who was inside the arrangement, not about how the colony produced.

A note on sources.

Instruments cited. The *indigénat* in French West Africa is cited from the decrees of 30 September 1887 and 21 November 1904, and the ten-year internment power and its stated grounds — insurrection against the authority of France, serious political disturbances, manoeuvres capable of compromising public security — are given as reproduced in the Francophone historical literature on the regime; this study has not inspected the decrees' texts directly and states the provisions as that literature reports them. The law of 11 April 1946 abolishing obligatory labour is cited by date only; it is commonly known by the name of its author, an African deputy of this territory.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship. The structure and operation of the *indigénat* — summary punishment by the *commandant de cercle* of a schedule of infractions special to natives, a tariff of fines and up to fifteen days' imprisonment executed immediately, the governor's signature obtained after the fact, the outlawing of corporal punishment and its continued use, the role and remembered violence of the *gardes-cercles*, and the exemption of canton chiefs from 1924 — follows the historical literature on the regime, principally Sylvie Thénault's work on the penal regime of the *indigénat* and Laurent Manière's study of the code in French West Africa, together with

the standard reference literature. **The finding that the majority of penalties pronounced by administrators sanctioned fiscal infractions is Thénault's and is load-bearing in this module; it is a French West African finding rather than an Ivorian one, and this study has not established the Ivorian proportion separately.** The Ivorian instances — the Kong *cercle* fines, the Grand-Bassam, Assinie and Séguéla cases, the political affairs bureau's observation that the 1887 decree's limits were not applied in this colony, and the *cercle* in which the native tribunal was convened forty-two times against two uses of disciplinary power, with the flight of porters and abandonment of loads punished by a month's imprisonment — are drawn from the study of magistrates and administrators in French West Africa published in *Clio@Thémis*, which cites the Senegalese national archives; this study has not seen the archival files and reports the cases as that article establishes them. The treatment of flight as protest migration, the 1918 flight from the Mossi country following a demand for ten thousand workers, the *cercle* commandant's estimates for 1924 and 1926, the preference of migrants for better-paid British employment, and the administration's inability to count those who avoided the frontier posts together with the consequences for the census and the colony's budgetary equilibrium, follow the work on protest migration and resistance to forced labour in French West Africa published in *Hommes & Migrations*, Anthony Asiwaju's study of migration between Côte d'Ivoire and the Gold Coast, Babacar Fall's work on forced labour in the federation, and Jean-Yves Marchal's study of internal Mossi migration. The post-1932 settlement policy, the Voltaic colonisation villages in the Gouro country, and the governor's 1933 estimate of fifty thousand workers for cocoa and as many again for other export crops follow the study of foreigners and land in colonial Côte d'Ivoire published through the IRD; the figures are as that study reports them from the Ivorian national archives.

Contested figures and soft points. The peak Voltaic migration figure of fifty-one thousand in 1951 and the statement that the Gold Coast flow already ran in the tens of thousands annually are taken from the CODESRIA literature on the Volta–Côte d’Ivoire relationship; the comparison between compelled and voluntary flows is drawn by this study from those figures and should be treated as an inference from them rather than as a finding of the cited work. Flight figures generally are administrative estimates by officials who had just told their superiors that they could not count the fugitives, and every number in this module’s exit section should be read in that light: they establish that substantial flight occurred and are not a measurement of how much. The argument that a planted tree functions as a closed exit dial is this study’s inference from the land law, the planting orders and the migration record; it has not been demonstrated from any statement by a cultivator, and the colonial archive is not the place such a statement would survive. It should be treated as a structural claim awaiting the test that the planted acreage can give it.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 6

FOUR FRANCS FIFTY, AND TWO SIXTY

Module 6 · Extraction — the tax, the labour and the crop; the same cocoa bought at two prices; and how an order that wanted a flow accidentally manufactured a stock in the hands of the people it was taking from

Which fork the colony was on

Before hunting for a “just enough” it is necessary to know whether the case has one, and this one does.

There are two ways to take a country’s wealth, and they lead to different politics. Where the object is a flow — harvest, rent, labour-days — the extractor tunes his demand and keeps the producer alive because he needs him producing, and the stable point sits just inside the revolt threshold. Where the object is the land itself, taken whole for settlement, there is no rate to tune: the taking is all-or-nothing and its two stable ends are the acceptance of landlessness or the removal of the people on the ground.

Côte d’Ivoire is unambiguously on the first fork, and the numbers say so. By 1936, on the figures reported in the Ivorian historical literature, African planters worked something close to six-sevenths of the colony’s cocoa plantations — **76,371 hectares against 11,311 hectares of European plantation**. France did not clear this country. It could not have: the armed floor was eight hundred and forty men budgetarily, and a country cannot be emptied by a force that cannot enter it. What France wanted here was the crop and the labour that produced

it, which means it needed the producer alive, in place and working — and that requirement, more than any doctrine, set the shape of everything in this module.

So two things governed how much could be taken: the credibility of the punishing force, which the *indigénat* kept high, and the availability of exit, which this colony's borders kept open for the propertyless and closed for the planted. What follows is the schedule those dials permitted.

The three takes

The head tax. The *impôt personnel* — the capitation — was payable in francs, which is the whole of its significance. A man growing yams to eat has no francs. To obtain francs he must sell something into a market the colony controls, or sell his labour to somebody who has them. The tax is therefore not primarily a revenue instrument; it is the device that converts a subsistence cultivator into a participant in the cash economy, and it does so annually, on pain of the fifteen days' imprisonment that the summary penal regime for natives mostly existed to enforce. Its level in this colony can be dated at one point precisely, because the governor recorded it: the obligation to balance the budget without the Government-General's help during the First World War forced him to raise the maximum rate **from five francs to eight**.

The labour. Forced labour in French West Africa ran from the conquest until the law of 11 April 1946, and in this colony and in Upper Volta — unlike Senegal, where a more or less free labour market developed early — the compelled mobilisation of workers was, in the specialist judgement, the base of the economic system. It ran through several channels: the *prestation*, days owed to the administration; the requisition of workers for public works; and, the mechanism that matters most here, the **requisition of labour for private enterprises**. That last is the

one to hold. The state did not merely take labour for its own roads and railway. It took labour and handed it to employers.

The crop. From 1930 the agricultural services propagated robusta coffee among peasants, and in the same period the administration was imposing on Ivorian cultivators the extension of cocoa and the planting of the first coffee for its own receipts. Compelled cultivation is the third take, and it is the one the study's schedule of mechanisms handles least well, for reasons this module will come to.

Around all three ran timber, the palm groves, and the great commercial houses that bought the crop at the port and sold the imports that the francs went back out on.

The same cocoa, two prices

Now the caste sorting, and it is the sharpest exhibit this study has found.

Two men in this colony in the early 1940s both owned cocoa trees, both sold beans into the same trade, and both wanted workers. One was European and one was African, and the arrangement treated them as follows, on the figures carried in the Ivorian historical literature and repeated in the accounts of the period:

The subsidy paid per hectare was **one thousand francs to the European planter and five hundred to the African**.

The price paid per kilogramme of cocoa was **four francs fifty to the European planter and two francs sixty to the African** — and the African received less than half of even that after the deduction of transport costs.

And the labour: faced with a shortage, French planters and foresters asked the authorities to close African planters' access

to administratively recruited labour altogether. Their request, on the standard account, was granted.

Read the three lines together, because the structure is exact. The same crop, from the same soil, in the same year, bought at two prices. The same activity, subsidised at two rates. And a state-run labour supply which one class of employer received and the other was excluded from — while remaining, as a *sujet*, personally liable to be requisitioned into it.

That last point is worth stating without ornament, because it is this collection's cleanest single caste exhibit. **An African planter could be drafted as forced labour onto a European plantation. A European planter received drafted labour and could not be drafted.** One man's body was an input to the other man's business, and the law that made the difference was not a law about cocoa or about land. It was the law about who was a citizen and who was a subject.

The response came in 1944, when African planters constituted a syndicate of their own — the *Syndicat Agricole Africain* — in direct answer to the refusal of the existing mixed planters' body to grant them the same premiums as their European colleagues. Its founding date is given in the sources as both 10 July and 3 September 1944, and this study does not resolve the discrepancy; the organisation, its membership and what it did next are taken up further on.

What the grievance was, and what it was not

Here the module reaches its finding, and it requires a distinction that is easily missed.

The caste line in this colony did not run between those who extracted and those extracted from. It ran **between two classes of extractor**. Both the European and the African planter bought labour; both sold into the same trade; both were, in relation to

the men working their trees, employers. What separated them was the schedule — the price, the premium, the access to the state's labour — and the schedule was set by a legal distinction of status that had nothing to do with what either man did.

A subordinate class that is itself an extracting class has a characteristic grievance, and it is not the grievance of the exploited. It is the grievance of the *undercharged competitor*. Its demand is not that the schedule end but that the schedule be applied to it on the same terms — and a demand of that shape presupposes the arrangement it complains of, because you cannot object to a differential without accepting the existence of the thing being differentiated.

The record supplies the confirmation, and it is uncomfortable. Forced labour was abolished by the law of 11 April 1946. Five years later, in **1951**, the African planters' syndicate joined with the European settlers to establish the *Syndicat Interprofessionnel pour l'Acheminement de la Main-d'Œuvre* — SIAMO — a joint body for channelling workers into the colony from the neighbouring territories. The class that had abolished compulsory labour had, within five years, co-founded with its former antagonists the institution that replaced it by other means.

This study's build documents described SIAMO as a European planters' body of the forced-labour era. That is wrong on both date and parentage, and the correction matters more than the error: **the labour-recruitment machine was not something the African planters fought. It was something they eventually co-owned.** What they had objected to was exclusion from it.

The flow that made a stock

And now the mechanism, which is visible only when the three takes are held together.

The two ways of taking are usually distinguished by *what* is taken: a rate, or the land itself. Neither describes what happened here, which is that an extractor pursuing a rate **created a stock in the hands of the extracted, as a by-product of pursuing the rate.**

Follow it step by step. The administration wanted receipts and export tonnage, so it ordered cultivators to plant cocoa and propagated robusta among peasants from 1930. Cocoa and coffee are perennials: a cocoa tree takes years to bear and then bears for decades. So the instruction to increase a flow could only be obeyed by creating an asset — and the asset stayed in the hands of the man who planted it, because the registry that would have converted his ground into a transferable thing was almost never used, and his standing crop was the one possession he could not carry across a border.

By 1936 the by-product amounted to seventy-six thousand hectares in African hands against eleven thousand in European. And one has to be careful about what that means. This was not a landed bourgeoisie: it was a very large number of very small holdings, in a colony that was still a minor world producer — Ivorian output stood at something under fifty-five thousand tonnes in 1939, roughly a sixth of the Gold Coast's, and the colony did not approach three hundred thousand tonnes until the fifteen years after the war. The cocoa giant is a post-1945 phenomenon and must not be retrojected. **But the class was there before the war, and it was there because the administration had ordered it into existence.**

That is the "just enough" equilibrium producing something the equilibrium was never meant to produce. The extractor kept the producer alive because he needed him producing; the producing required trees; the trees were property; and property in the hands of a subject population is the one thing an extractive order has no mechanism to take back once it has declined, for reasons of its own economy, to build a register.

Two prices, and what grew out of them

The line that mattered most in this colony did not run between those who took and those who were taken from. It ran between two sets of men who were both taking.

The European planter and the African planter both owned cocoa trees, both sold beans into the same trade, and both wanted workers. What separated them was a schedule: a thousand francs a hectare against five hundred, four francs fifty a kilo against two sixty, and a state labour supply that one of them received and the other was excluded from — while remaining, as a subject, personally liable to be marched onto the first man's plantation. One man's body was an input to the other man's business, and the law that made the difference was not about cocoa or about land. It was about who was a citizen.

A subordinate class that is nonetheless an extracting class has a particular kind of grievance, and it is not the grievance of the exploited. It is the grievance of the competitor charged the wrong rate. Its demand is not that the schedule end but that it be applied on equal terms — and a demand of that shape accepts the thing it complains of, because there is no such thing as objecting to a differential without conceding the schedule.

The record settles the point in the harshest way available. Forced labour was abolished in April 1946. Five years later the African planters' syndicate joined the European settlers to found a common body for channelling workers into the colony from the neighbouring territories. The men who had ended compulsory labour co-founded, with the people they had fought, the machine that replaced it. What they had objected to was exclusion from it.

That is worth holding when the question of leaving or staying finally arrives, because a class that spent a decade demanding admission to an arrangement is not a class whose ledger reads *go*.

And then the mechanism that nobody designed, which is the largest thing in this module.

An extractor who wants a rate rather than a country keeps his producer alive, because he needs him producing. That is ordinary. What is not ordinary is that here the rate could only be raised by creating an asset, and the asset stayed with the man who made it. The administration wanted receipts and tonnage, so it ordered cultivators to plant cocoa and pushed robusta among peasants from 1930. Cocoa and coffee are perennials: obeying the order meant putting something in the ground that would still be there in thirty years. The registry that could have made those trees a thing the state might take was never built, and a standing crop cannot be carried across a border. By 1936 the by-product came to seventy-six thousand hectares in African hands against eleven thousand European.

Hold the scale honestly. This was not a landed bourgeoisie but a very large number of very small holdings, in a colony that was still a minor world producer — under fifty-five thousand tonnes in 1939 against the Gold Coast's three hundred thousand, and nothing approaching that figure here until the fifteen years after the war. The cocoa giant is a post-war thing and must not be read backwards. But the class was there before the war, and it was there because the administration had ordered it into being.

Which makes the biology of the crop a fact about the politics. An extractive colony ordered onto annual food crops and one ordered onto trees will produce different subject populations out of identical laws, because only one of them converts a producer into a proprietor. Whether that is what separated this territory from its neighbour is the question this study ends on.

A note on sources.

Instruments and figures from the primary record. The wartime rise of the maximum personal tax from five to eight francs is

Angoulvant's own, from the foreword to *La Pacification de la Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris, Larose, 1916). The law of 11 April 1946 abolishing obligatory labour is cited by date only.

The caste figures, and a warning about them. The subsidy differential of one thousand francs per hectare to European planters against five hundred to African, and the cocoa price of four francs fifty against two francs sixty with the African receiving less than half of his figure after transport deductions, are the figures carried in the Ivorian historical and commemorative literature on the founding of the Syndicat Agricole Africain. **This study has not traced them to an archival series or to a peer-reviewed study, and they should be treated as the received figures of a national historiography rather than as verified administrative data.** They are consistent with the structure the scholarly literature describes and with the syndicate's stated founding grievance, and they are given here because that grievance is unintelligible without them; but a reader who needs them to be exact should go to the Ivorian national archives, and this study would welcome a correction. The account that French planters and foresters petitioned to have African planters excluded from administratively recruited labour, and that the petition succeeded, is drawn from the Baulin archive's study of Ivorian domestic politics and is likewise reported rather than independently verified.

The planted-area measurement. The figures of 76,371 hectares of African cocoa plantation against 11,311 hectares of European, and the export tonnages of 43,564 for 1935 and 49,765 for 1936, are as given in the Ivorian cocoa-sector historical literature drawing on colonial statistics; the ratio of roughly six to seven parts African is that literature's characterisation. The comparison with Gold Coast output — Ivorian production under fifty-five thousand tonnes in 1939 against roughly three hundred thousand — and the timing of Côte d'Ivoire's approach to three

hundred thousand tonnes in the fifteen years before independence follow the general history of cocoa cultivation. These are colonial-era statistics with the usual limitations, and the hectarage figures in particular are administrative estimates of a smallholder sector the administration had trouble counting.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship. The characterisation of forced labour as the base of the economic system in Côte d’Ivoire and Upper Volta, against Senegal’s earlier free labour market, follows the work on forced labour and protest migration in French West Africa, including Babacar Fall. The propagation of robusta among peasants from 1930 and the traditional principle that clearing confers possession follow the Ivorian theses on the Syndicat Agricole Africain and on plantation economy in the forest zone. The joint establishment of SIAMO in 1951 by the African planters’ syndicate together with the European settlers, and its function of drawing workers from neighbouring territories, follows the analysis of the Ivorian national project published in *Politique africaine*; this study’s working notes described SIAMO differently and the correction is made in the text.

Not used, because it could not be verified. This study was directed to examine a reported episode in which African planters’ holdings were condemned or destroyed on the pretext of plant disease while the real objection was successful competition with European planters. **No source has been found for it in this round of verification, and it is therefore not used, not paraphrased, and not alluded to in the argument above.** The swollen-shoot epidemic that struck the Gold Coast from 1936 and prompted a research institute which Côte d’Ivoire imitated in 1946 is a separate and documented matter and is not evidence for the episode. If the episode is real it belongs in this module and would strengthen it; it should not enter until somebody has the document.

Soft points. The founding date of the Syndicat Agricole Africain is given in the sources as both 10 July 1944 and 3 September 1944 and is left unresolved here. The claim that compelled perennial planting converted producers into proprietors is this study's inference from the hectarage measurement, the compelled-cultivation record and the finding that the registry went unused; it is a structural argument, not a demonstrated causal chain, and the Guinea comparison that would test it is made at the end of this study.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 7

NEITHER PARLIAMENT NOR THE COURTS

Module 7 · Information and Suppression — the clause that made an African press impossible without censoring anybody, the month the troops fired, and the discovery that the facts reached Paris, were debated there, and changed nothing

The valve nobody had to turn

Start with what was not done, because it is the more instructive half.

France did know how to censor a colony. In Madagascar a decree of 16 February 1901 required the governor-general's authorisation to found a newspaper, forbade political articles outright, and established a censorship service whose particular concern was the publications of the English Protestant missions. That is an apparatus: a licensing power, a prohibited subject, an office, and a target. Where the metropole wanted one, it built one.

In French West Africa it did not need to, because of a clause.

The law of 29 July 1881 on the freedom of the press is the founding text of French press liberty, and its final article extends it explicitly to Algeria and the colonies. On its face this is the most liberal press regime in Europe applied to the empire: no prior authorisation, no *cautionnement*, no censorship before publication, only prosecution for defined offences after it. But article 6 requires that the *gérant* — the manager legally

responsible for any publication — be French, of age, and in the enjoyment of his civil rights.

A *sujet* was not a French citizen. He therefore could not be the responsible manager of a newspaper, and the question of what he might have printed never had to arise. **The freest press law in Europe, applied unaltered, closed the press to the governed by a single clause about status, and it did so without a censor, a licence, an index, or a single act of suppression.** The restriction was tightened later — a decree of 4 August 1921 restricted the circulation in French West Africa of publications in indigenous languages — but the essential work was done in 1881, by a statute nobody in the metropole would have described as repressive, and which in the metropole was not.

This is the mechanism this collection has named before and should name again here: where an order runs by law, the law is the robe. A metropolitan public reading its own press law saw a guarantee. The same text, applied to a population of subjects, was a foreclosure, and the identity of the two is what made it invisible from Paris.

What suppression there was

It would be wrong to conclude from that clause that the seam was held gently. There was a security apparatus, and it worked in the ordinary way.

The summary penal regime for natives, whose schedule of infractions included refusing to assist the authorities, disrespect toward an administrator, and calling a strike, was itself an instrument of political suppression available to any commandant without reference to anyone. Trade-union leadership was gated: the decree of 11 August 1944 that legalised African unions retained the *certificat d'études primaires* as a condition of holding union office, and required unions to file their annual

accounts with the public prosecutor — restrictions that survived until the overseas labour code of 1952. A schooling certificate which the colony had issued to a tiny minority became the qualification for leading a union, so the withheld formation doubled as a political filter. Nobody had to ban anything.

The direct method had been demonstrated long before: in 1915 the administration arrested a preacher who had converted something over a hundred thousand people, beat him, deported him and demolished the buildings — and the episode passed without any metropolitan consequence whatever, because there was nobody in Paris with standing to raise it and nobody in the colony with a newspaper.

What changed between 1915 and 1949 was not French policy. It was that the colony now sent men to the National Assembly.

January and February 1950

The crisis of 1949–50 is this study's test case, and its trigger is worth noting before its violence, because the trigger is economic.

The territory's African party, the section of the interterritorial *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain*, sat in Paris with the Communist group and had declared at its Treichville congress of January 1949 that it fought colonial oppression and stood with the Vietminh and the Malagasy. In 1948 the governor André Latrille, judged too accommodating, had been replaced by Laurent Péchoux, whose brief was to break the party. The administration encouraged defections, assisted the formation of rival parties, and used the resulting friction.

On 6 February 1949 shots were fired at Treichville, and Péchoux arrested a large part of the party's leadership — the counts given in the sources run from about thirty to about fifty, including eight members of its directing committee — and held

them at Grand-Bassam, seat of the assize court. They waited close to ten months for trial and then went on hunger strike in order to obtain one. The women of the party marched on the Bassam prison.

The party's answer used the one instrument its members possessed. It called a strike of purchases — a boycott of imported manufactures — and a refusal to sell the crop. The men who could withhold cocoa and coffee did so, and the trade felt it, which is why the incidents that followed cluster around the commercial chain. At Bouaflé an African trader buying coffee on behalf of the great commercial companies fired on two local party secretaries, accusing them of instigating the growers' refusal to sell; he took refuge with the administration; the crowd came to demand justice, was sent away, and began pulling down his house. The troops intervened, pursued the crowd and fired: three dead and eleven wounded, in front of their own houses, followed by mass arrests. That was 21 January 1950. At Dimbokro on 30 January the troops fired again: thirteen or fourteen dead and some fifty wounded. At Séguéla on 2 February, three dead. On 27 January the administration attempted to arrest the territory's own deputy — a warrant against a sitting member of the French National Assembly — and did not execute it.

The totals for the episode are given in the Ivorian literature as of the order of fifty dead; one widely used Ivorian teaching account gives fifty-two dead and some three thousand wounded, a wounded figure this study regards as unverified and probably inflated, and gives as such. The party was forbidden to hold meetings and went underground.

The senator

And then the fact that decides this module.

Victor Biaka Boda was a senator — a member of the Council of the Republic, elected from this territory, a member of the French Parliament. He disappeared in the Bouaflé area in late January 1950, during the same weeks. His remains were identified some six months later. On the account of a French contemporary who followed the affair closely and published on it, there followed no reaction from Parliament and none from the judiciary, notwithstanding the complaint lodged by his family.

Hold the elements apart. A sitting member of the French Parliament vanished in a French territory during an operation conducted by a French governor against the party that member belonged to. His body was found. His family went to law. And the two institutions of the Republic whose entire function is to notice such things — the chamber he sat in and the courts — did not.

This is not concealment. It is the opposite of concealment. Everything in the preceding paragraphs was known in Paris at the time, and the record proves it, because the record is a parliamentary one: on 16 February 1950 the Assembly debated the situation, and a deputy of the interterritorial party rose to denounce the arrests at Bouaflé, Dimbokro and Agboville and the pattern they formed — the confrontations, the beatings, the intervention of troops at Agboville, Daloa, Odienné, Séguéla, Palaka, in his phrase very nearly everywhere in the territory. The speech is printed in the *Journal officiel*, in the debates of the National Assembly for that date, at page 1136.

The facts travelled. They were spoken aloud in the chamber that funded the colony. They were typeset, bound and shelved. And the governor remained in post, the party remained banned, the senator remained dead, and the file remained closed.

The seam, tested

The question to ask is, of an order answering to a distant metropole, whether the seam is held open by concealment or by

indifference — noting that an uninteresting fact is safer than a censored one, and that missing suppression records may mean nobody was watching rather than that nothing was hidden.

On this colony's evidence the answer is neither, quite, and the third thing is worth naming precisely.

It was not concealment, because the material was tabled, debated and published. It was not simple indifference either, because someone in the chamber cared enough to speak and someone in the ministry cared enough to have sent Péchoux with a brief. What held the seam was a **disconnection between metropolitan knowledge and metropolitan consequence**: the information arrived, was processed by the institution designed to process it, and produced no act. And the processing is not incidental to that outcome. It is the mechanism. **A fact that has been formally raised and formally answered has been dealt with**, and the file it generates is evidence that the system worked. There is no further obligation, because the obligation was discharged by the debate.

Which yields a harder version of the general rule. An uninteresting fact is safer than a censored one, because nobody looks for it. **A fact that has been debated in parliament and printed in the official record is safer than either, because everybody can see that it was looked at.**

Two supporting observations. First, the party's own strategy confirms the reading from the other side: what it did after 1950 was not to publicise harder but to change its position, breaking with the Communists and turning toward accommodation with the administration — the shift announced publicly in October 1950 and taken up later in this study. A movement that concluded that being heard was not the same as being answered drew the obvious inference. Second, the difference between 1915 and 1950 is not that France grew more restrained. In 1915 an administration removed a mass religious movement's founder

with no metropolitan echo at all; in 1950 it killed some fifty people and there was an echo. The echo existed because the colony now elected deputies and senators who sat in Paris. That is the residue of plurality doing exactly as much as it could do — enough to put the facts on the page, not enough to change what the troops did.

Known, printed, and unanswered

France knew perfectly well how to censor a colony. In Madagascar a decree of 1901 required the governor-general's permission to found a newspaper, forbade political articles outright, and set up an office to enforce both. Where the metropole wanted an apparatus it built one.

In West Africa it did not need to, because of a clause. The law of 1881 — the founding guarantee of French press freedom, extended by its own last article to Algeria and the colonies — required that the man legally responsible for any publication be a French citizen. A subject was not one, and so the question of what he might have printed never arose. No censor, no licence, no index, no prosecution: the freest press law in Europe, applied unaltered, emptied the press of Africans by defining who was permitted to run one. The instrument and the guarantee were the same document, which is exactly why nobody at home had cause to look at it.

That is the cheapest form of control there is, and it should not be mistaken for gentleness. This administration arrested, deported, fired on crowds and banned a party. But its ordinary working method was to arrange matters so that nothing had to be suppressed.

Then, in 1950, the arrangement was tested in the only way that matters, and the result is the finding of this module.

Troops fired at Bouaflé, at Dimbokro, at Séguéla; something of the order of fifty people died; the leadership had already spent ten months in prison awaiting a trial they had to go on hunger strike to obtain; and a sitting member of the French Parliament disappeared in those same weeks and his remains were identified six months later, upon which neither the chamber he belonged to nor the courts inquired into anything, notwithstanding his family's complaint.

None of this was hidden. On 16 February 1950 the National Assembly debated it. A deputy stood up and listed the places where troops had intervened. The speech was typeset, bound and shelved, and it is there still, at a page number a historian can cite. The facts travelled the whole distance from a village in the Ivorian forest to the chamber that funded the colony — and the governor stayed in post, the party stayed banned, the senator stayed dead, and the file stayed closed.

So the distance between what was said in Paris and what was done here was not maintained by keeping Paris ignorant. It was maintained by there being no route from Parisian knowledge to Parisian action. And the debate is not incidental to that; it is the mechanism. A thing formally raised and formally answered has been *dealt with*, and the record it generates is proof that the system worked. An uninteresting fact is safer than a censored one because nobody looks for it. A fact debated in parliament and printed in the official record is safer than either, because everybody can see that it was looked at.

The party drew the obvious conclusion. What it did after 1950 was not to publicise harder. It changed its position, broke with the Communists, and turned toward accommodation — the response of a movement that had discovered being heard and being answered are different things.

One last observation, about who forced the seam open. It was not a newspaper, because subjects could not lawfully run one. It

was a strike of purchases and a refusal to sell the crop — the growers withholding cocoa and coffee until the trade felt it, which is why the killing began around men buying coffee on the companies' account. Where the press is closed by a rule about status, the crop becomes the medium. And the state answered a market action with soldiers, which shows it understood the substitution perfectly well.

A note on sources.

Instruments quoted or cited. The law of 29 July 1881 on the freedom of the press is quoted for its extension to Algeria and the colonies, which appears in its own text, and cited for the requirement in article 6 that a publication's responsible manager be French, of age and in enjoyment of his civil rights; the extension clause is verified against the published text, the article 6 requirement is given as the Francophone press-history literature reports it and this study has not read that article in the original. The decree of 4 August 1921 restricting circulation of publications in indigenous languages in French West Africa is cited as that same literature reports it; the source consulted is truncated at the operative words and the provision is therefore stated in general terms only. The Madagascar press decree of 16 February 1901 is cited from the history of the press in the French colonies published through the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine. The decree of 11 August 1944 retaining the *certificat d'études primaires* as a condition of union office and requiring unions to file accounts with the public prosecutor, in force until the 1952 overseas labour code, is cited from the Ivorian doctoral literature on the Syndicat Agricole Africain.

The parliamentary record. The National Assembly debate of 16 February 1950 in which a deputy of the interterritorial party denounced the arrests at Bouaflé, Dimbokro and Agboville and listed the localities where troops had intervened is cited as

Journal officiel de la République française, débats parlementaires, Assemblée nationale, 16 February 1950, p. 1136, following the citation given in the scholarly article on the contestation of colonial power in Côte d'Ivoire published in the Burkinabè review of letters and social sciences. **This study has not inspected the *Journal officiel* page itself.** That is a real limitation here, because the existence and content of that debate is the module's principal evidence; the citation is precise and comes from peer-reviewed work, and a reader wishing to test this module's central claim should begin there.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship and from contemporary accounts. The replacement of Governor Latrille by Péchoux and its purpose, the administration's encouragement of defections and rival parties, the Treichville arrests of 6 February 1949 and the detention at Grand-Bassam, the ten-month wait and the hunger strike, the women's march, the purchase strike and refusal to sell, the incidents at Bouaflé, Dimbokro and Séguéla with their dates and tolls, the attempted arrest of the territory's deputy on 27 January 1950, and the banning of the party, follow the Ivorian historical and educational literature on the accession to independence, the scholarly article cited above, and the contemporary French account by Claude Gérard published in *Esprit* and since reproduced; Gérard's account is paraphrased and not quoted, being a twentieth-century copyrighted text. The disappearance of Senator Victor Biaka Boda, the identification of his remains some six months later, and the absence of any reaction from Parliament or the judiciary despite his family's complaint, are from that same contemporary account and are paraphrased from it.

Contested figures. The number arrested at Treichville in February 1949 is given as about thirty in one Ivorian account and about fifty in another; both agree on eight members of the directing committee. Dimbokro is given as thirteen dead in one source and fourteen in another. The overall toll for 1950 is given

as of the order of fifty dead; an Ivorian teaching document gives fifty-two dead and approximately three thousand wounded. **The wounded figure is not corroborated and this study does not adopt it**; it is recorded here only because it circulates and a reader will meet it. Biaka Boda's death is described in the Ivorian literature as an assassination carried out on the administration's instructions; the contemporary account this module follows records his disappearance, the later identification of his remains, and the absence of any inquiry, and does not establish who killed him. This study states what the record establishes and does not assert the attribution.

A standing caution. Almost every account of these events available in this round of research is written either by participants and their allies or by the Ivorian national historiography that succeeded them. The administration's own version exists in the colonial archives and has not been consulted. The module's structural claim — that the facts reached Paris and produced no act — does not depend on whose account of the shooting is accurate, since it rests on the parliamentary record and on the absence of consequence rather than on the toll; but the tolls themselves should be read as one side's, and are weighed again where this study counts the cost.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 8

TWO HECTARES OF COFFEE, THREE OF COCOA

Module 8 · Elite Coordination and the Default — the chain audited link by link, the war that split the European caste in two, and the circular by which a counter-elite wrote its own property qualification

The question, and why it is not about the common man

The common man is settled. The preceding modules have shown how: an *indigénat* that could fine and jail him this afternoon, a head tax payable in francs he had to earn, a labour draft, a schedule of demands scoring his year, and — for the man who had planted — a standing crop he could not carry across a border. Peasants and labourers do not change arrangements of that kind. They flee them, they endure them, and occasionally they die in the streets of Dimbokro.

This module is about the tier above him, and it asks one question at every link: **does this man, in defending his own position, thereby defend the whole arrangement?** Where the answer is yes all the way up, the order reproduces by default and needs no cabal, because nobody has to intend the outcome for everybody to produce it. Where the answer is no at some link, that link is the fault line — and the study's expectation, which this case confirms sharply, is that the weak link is more often near the top than the bottom.

The chain, link by link

The metropolitan treasury and ministry. Aligned, and cheaply: this colony ran budget surpluses in some years by its own governor's account, produced cocoa, coffee and timber, and cost almost nothing to garrison. Defending the arrangement was defending a source of receipts nobody at home had to think about. What happened when someone did is recorded further on.

The governor. Here the chain breaks, and the break is the module's central finding, so it is set out separately below.

The European planters and foresters. Aligned, and organised: they sat in the Chamber of Agriculture and in the mixed planters' syndicate, and petitioned successfully to have African planters excluded from administratively recruited labour. Their position depended on the arrangement's caste schedule, and defending the schedule was defending themselves. When the African planters organised in 1944, the settlers went to law against the man leading them.

The commercial houses. Aligned, with a qualification that will matter. The great trading firms bought the crop at the *traite* and sold the imports the francs went out on, and their margin came from standing between the grower and the market. That position was defended by defending the arrangement — until the arrangement began letting somebody else stand there.

The canton chief. Aligned, and structurally the most reliable link in the chain, for the reason already given: he owed compliance and held nothing the arrangement had not given him. He collected the tax, furnished the labour, enumerated the population and applied the *indigénat* at the point where it touched an individual, and he was exempted from that same *indigénat* himself from 1924, which put a legal floor under his position and marked him off from the people he administered. Ask him the default question and the answer is unambiguous: if the arrangement ended tomorrow, so did he.

The tirailleur. Aligned by wage, as the conquest itself showed, and without any requirement that he believe anything.

The African planter. And here the answer is *no*, and it is worth being precise about why. He was not a rebel and not excluded; he was inside the extraction, an employer, a taxpayer, a seller into the same trade as the European beside him. But the thing he held — seventy-six thousand hectares of standing cocoa across the class by 1936 — had not been given him by the arrangement and could not be repossessed by it, because the registry that would have made his ground a thing the state could take was never built. **He was the only man in the chain whose position would survive the arrangement's end.** That is what makes him the fault line, and it is not a matter of his opinions.

The crack at the top

Now the governor, and the reason the chain broke where it did.

The Second World War split the French state, and the split ran straight into this colony. French West Africa went over to the Free French in 1943. Governor André Latrille was appointed to Abidjan by René Pleven, Commissioner for the Colonies of the French Committee of National Liberation at Algiers; his *chef de cabinet* was close to the Communist Party. The European settler population of the colony was, on the standard account, substantially of the other party — nostalgic for Vichy — and the new administration therefore faced, inside its own caste, a bloc it had reason to distrust and no reason to protect.

What it did about that is the finding. **It encouraged the Africans to organise against the settlers.**

The sequence is tight enough to be read as a single operation. Large African planters — men of the Chamber of Agriculture, holding twenty-five hectares and upward, scattered across

Yamoussoukro, Agboville, Daloa, Bouaflé, Aboisso, Grand-Lahou and Bassam — had been meeting through 1943 and 1944 about their treatment by the existing mixed syndicate. On 10 July 1944 they gathered at Georges Kassi's Étoile du Sud in Treichville and constituted the *Syndicat Agricole Africain*, electing as president the youngest of them, Félix Houphouët — a canton chief with the ear of the new administration. On **7 August 1944 the French Committee of National Liberation authorised the formation of trade unions in the colonies**. On **8 August**, one day later, Latrille approved the syndicate's statutes.

A colonial administration does not approve an African planters' union the day after such unions become legal unless it wants one. This study would read this exactly as it reads any other elite move: not as generosity, and not as the ruled wresting a concession, but as **one faction of a divided elite arming a subordinate class against another faction of the same elite.** The settlers understood it perfectly and sued.

And Latrille went further. The syndicate obtained from him the right to sell its members' production in bulk directly to the wholesalers, capturing the margin that had gone to the intermediary buyers, and the right to order and receive imported goods. For a small planter lately liable to be requisitioned, that was, in the phrase of the Ivorian historians, a dazzling promotion — and structurally it was more than that. It gave the African planter class a *commercial function*: the syndicate now stood where the trading houses had stood, between the grower and the market, holding an import allocation. The class that could withhold the crop, which used that power in 1949, acquired the machinery to do it in 1945, from the governor.

The circular

Which brings the module to its document, and to the sentence this study did not expect to find.

On 19 April 1945 the syndicate’s president sent a circular to the regional delegates, and it contains a rule:

> *Refusez comme adhérent tout Africain ne possédant pas au moins deux hectares de caféiers ou trois hectares de cacaoyers en rapport.*
>
> Refuse as a member any African not possessing at least two hectares of coffee trees or three hectares of cocoa trees in bearing.

A property qualification, in writing, from the president to his organisers, in the second year of the body’s existence. Not two hectares of land: two hectares *in bearing* — a threshold that excludes not only the landless but the man who planted last season and is waiting for his trees.

The membership figures make the effect legible. The syndicate began with some sixteen hundred adherents and reached about twenty thousand within a year, and the Ivorian scholarship describes that twenty thousand as very nearly the whole of the class holding two hectares of coffee or three of cocoa. In other words the syndicate did not grow *into* the peasantry. It grew until it had enrolled the qualifying class and then stopped, because the rule stopped it.

Set that beside what the organisation asked for. It demanded equal premiums, equal prices, equal access to recruited labour, better wages and the end of forced labour — and the last of those, tabled by its president as deputy on 1 March 1946 and enacted as the law of 11 April 1946, is a genuine emancipation of hundreds of thousands of people who were not members and could not be. But the demands were framed by a body constitutionally composed of proprietors, and the abolition of forced labour was, for those proprietors, also the removal of the mechanism by which their European competitors got workers they did not.

The sequel is the confirmation: in 1951, five years after abolition, the same African planters' syndicate joined with the European settlers to found SIAMO, the joint body for channelling labour into the colony from the neighbouring territories. Once the caste schedule was equalised, the two planter blocs had no quarrel left, because their quarrel had never been about the labour system. It had been about which of them the labour system served.

Classifying the case

Name the bargain plainly. A conqueror short of men and money finds the people who already command obedience and pays them to keep collecting on his behalf — land, office, salary, in exchange for order. The old version of that bargain also bought soldiers, and left the grantee with a following of his own and the conqueror with a permanent rival. The colonial version strikes the military clause out: the grantee gets a position and owes only compliance.

This colony struck that bargain twice, on two tiers, and the two considerations produced opposite results.

The first co-optation, of the canton chiefs, bought compliance. Office, a share of the tax, exemption from the *indigénat* from 1924, no armed capacity, no independent base. The consideration was administrative service, and the grantee held nothing that outlived the grant. It produced a perfectly reliable tier and a politically inert one: several hundred men who could be removed by a stroke of a *cercle* officer's pen, and who therefore never became a party to any negotiation.

The second co-optation, of the planters in 1944–45, bought a partner. The consideration here is peculiar and it is the reason the case matters: the administration granted a *marketing and import function* to a class that already owned its productive base. It did not create the planters' position; it added a margin

to a position they held independently. And a grantee whose base is his own can walk away from the grant without ceasing to exist.

That is a third setting on the consideration variable and this study would carry it. The card distinguishes the grant that buys service — leaving a rival with a retinue and a permanent civil-war risk — from the grant that buys compliance, leaving a dependant with a title. Côte d'Ivoire supplies the case in between: **the grant made to a class that already holds its own base, which buys neither service nor dependency but partnership.** A partner is the one kind of grantee who can *renegotiate*, because the threat of withdrawal is credible in both directions. He does not need a retinue, because he does not need to fight; he needs only to be able to survive the arrangement's end, and the arrangement cannot make him unable to.

Run the default question against that tier one last time. If the colonial arrangement ended tomorrow, the metropolitan treasury lost receipts; the settlers lost their schedule; the trading houses lost their margin; the canton chiefs lost their existence; the tirailleur lost his wage. **The African planter kept his trees.** He is the only man in the chain for whom the answer was neutral — and a man for whom the answer is neutral is not thereby an enemy of the arrangement. He is simply free to price it.

Where this chain was fragile

Two exposures, briefly.

A surplus of educated claimants was not this order's risk. The colonial administration was small, its claimants were metropolitan, and its outlet was the whole empire; the African tier the colony had formed was minute — some two thousand Ponty graduates for eight territories across half a century. There was no surplus of educated claimants pressing on a fixed number of positions here. What there was instead was the

opposite condition: a *propertied* claimant class far larger than the credentialed one, formed by trees rather than by schools, which is a shape the overproduction literature does not describe.

The real exposure is that the coordinating class was split by an external war and never fully reunited. The Vichy–Free France fracture is what let the second co-optation happen at all, and the swing back is visible in the record: Latrille was replaced in 1948 by Péchoux with a brief to break the party his predecessor had helped license, which produced the shootings of 1950. An administration that arms a class in one decade and shoots at it in the next has not changed its mind about anything; it has changed which faction holds the pen. **The instability is at the top, exactly where the pattern suggests to look, and the class created in the swing does not disappear when the swing reverses.**

Who would have lost, and who would not

Run one question down the chain: if this arrangement ended tomorrow, is this man better or worse off?

The metropolitan treasury loses receipts. The settler loses the schedule that pays him four francs fifty where his African neighbour gets two sixty. The trading house loses the margin it earns by standing between the grower and the market. The canton chief loses his existence, because everything he holds is an office a *cercle* officer wrote into being and can write out again. The tirailleur loses his wage. Every one of them, defending himself, defends the whole — which is why the order needed no conspiracy and had none.

The African planter keeps his trees.

He is the only man in the chain for whom the answer is neutral, and it is not a matter of his opinions. He was inside the extraction, an employer, a taxpayer, selling into the same trade

as the Frenchman beside him. But the seventy-six thousand hectares his class held by 1936 had not been given him by the arrangement, and the register that would have let the arrangement take them back was never built. A man in that position is not thereby an enemy of the order. He is simply free to price it.

Which is why the grant of 1945 is a different kind of transaction from anything else in this study. When the administration let the African syndicate sell its members' crop in bulk and receive imported goods, it was not creating the planters' position. It was adding a margin to a position they already held. A grant of that shape buys neither a servant nor a dependant. It buys a **partner** — and a partner is the one sort of grantee who can renegotiate, because he can walk away without ceasing to exist. Ask him what he loses if the arrangement ends and the answer is a margin, not a position; and where that is the answer you are dealing with a matter of price rather than of loyalty.

Set that beside the canton chief and the whole colony's later politics is visible in the contrast. Two African tiers inside one arrangement, one holding an office it was given and one holding trees it was not, with opposite answers to the same question.

Now the second thing, which is that none of this happened because Africans grew strong.

Nothing in the ruled population changed between 1943 and 1944. What changed was that the French state had split, and the men holding the pen in Algiers had a quarrel with the men holding land in Abidjan. A colonial administration does not approve an African planters' union the day after such unions become legal unless it wants one; the settlers understood it at once and sued. The opening was not wrung from a reluctant state. It was a weapon issued by one faction of the state against another — which means the subordinate class's opportunity was a function of the fracture above it rather than of its own

strength, and could be withdrawn as suddenly as it arrived. In 1948 a new governor was sent with a brief to break the party his predecessor had helped license, and in 1950 the troops fired. An administration that arms a class in one decade and shoots at it in the next has not changed its mind about anything. It has changed which faction holds the pen. But the class it created in the swing does not disappear when the swing reverses.

And the third thing, stated without comment. The organisation that would govern this country for the whole of its first thirty-three years was constituted, in writing, in April 1945, as a body of proprietors — refuse as a member any African without two hectares of coffee or three of cocoa in bearing. It enrolled very nearly the whole of the qualifying class and very nearly nobody else. Its demands were for equal premiums, equal prices, equal access to recruited labour, and an end to forced labour, which it obtained. Its central request was admission to the arrangement rather than the end of it.

The counter-elite this colony produced was not the excluded. It was the qualified.

A note on sources.

Quoted exactly. The circular of 19 April 1945 to the regional delegates of the Syndicat Agricole Africain — *Refusez comme adhérent tout Africain ne possédant pas au moins deux hectares de caféiers ou trois hectares de cacaoyers en rapport* — is quoted as reproduced in the Baulin archive's study of Houphouët-Boigny's domestic politics, which cites it as a circular of that date. **This study has not seen the original document.** The clause is load-bearing in this module and a reader testing the argument should seek it in the Ivorian national archives or the Fondation Houphouët-Boigny; if the wording proves different the module's third finding weakens and should be revised.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship and reference literature. The appointment of Latrille by René Pleven for the French Committee of National Liberation, the political character of his cabinet, the Vichy sympathies attributed to the settler population, and the administration's encouragement of African organisation against the settlers, follow the West African political-historical literature on the emergence of the RDA. The meetings of large African planters through 1943–44, the gathering of 10 July 1944 at the Étoile du Sud and the election of the syndicate's officers, the CFLN's authorisation of colonial trade unions on 7 August 1944 and Latrille's approval of the statutes on 8 August, the settlers' legal action, the growth from about sixteen hundred adherents to about twenty thousand, the characterisation of that twenty thousand as approximately the whole qualifying class, and the syndicate's acquisition from Latrille of the right to sell members' produce in bulk and to receive imported goods, follow the Ivorian scholarly literature — including the doctoral work on the Syndicat Agricole Africain and Jean-Noël Loucou's history — together with the Baulin archive. The exemption of canton chiefs from the *indigénat* from 1924 follows the historical literature on that regime.

Contested dates and figures. The syndicate's founding date appears in the sources as 10 July 1944 (the Treichville meeting), 8 August 1944 (approval of statutes), and 3 September 1944 (given by several references as the founding proper); this module treats 10 July as the constitutive meeting and 8 August as the administrative recognition, and notes that the 3 September date is widely repeated and not reconciled here. Membership is given as approximately twenty thousand in most accounts; the Baulin archive reports a statement distinguishing twelve thousand adherents from twenty thousand men holding the qualifying acreage, which would make the enrolment about three-fifths of the qualifying class rather than nearly all of it. **This study cannot resolve the two readings and has stated**

the more conservative implication in the text where it matters. The forced-labour abolition is dated 11 April 1946; one reference gives adoption in 1947 and is not followed.

Soft points. The characterisation of the settler population's politics as Vichyite rests on the standard narrative of the period and has not been tested against a settler source; it is plausible, widely repeated, and convenient to the argument, which is exactly the combination that should make a reader want the evidence. This module has not established the size of the European population of the colony, nor the number of canton chiefs on any administrative return — the figure of about four hundred used above remains a contemporary's statement — and both would sharpen the audit. The claim that the trading margin granted in 1945 constituted a co-optation rather than a concession is this study's reading of the sequence; the administration's own account of why it granted it has not been consulted and sits in the Ivorian and French colonial archives.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 9

CITIZENS OF THE SECOND COLLEGE

Module 9 · Plurality or Foreclosure — the eighteen months in which a subject population acquired unions, a vote, citizenship and the end of forced labour; the law five months later that segregated the electorate; and the discovery that absorption forecloses more completely than shooting

The question, stated structurally

Liberty is not what an order says about itself. It is a fact about how many hands hold the three monopolies. Where violence, wealth and trusted information are gathered in one coalition, there is no liberty whatever the rhetoric, because there is nowhere for a man to stand that the same coalition does not own. Where they are genuinely split among groups that can check one another, liberty tends to appear — not because anybody intended it, but as *residue*: factions fighting for protection from each other build fences that end up sheltering everyone. Due process begins as a barons' guarantee against a king. Free speech begins as a printer's protection against a licenser. The rights are the leavings of a quarrel.

So the question for this colony is not whether France proclaimed liberty — it did, continuously, and the proclamation was addressed to Paris. It is: **were the three monopolies split anywhere the ruled could reach, and what did they get out of it?**

The inventory

Violence. Held in one hand throughout. The garrison, the *gardes-cercles*, the *indigénat*, the *cercle* commandant's power to fine and jail without procedure — all of it ran to the same administration, and none of it was checkable from inside the colony. Captured.

Wealth. Split, and this is the colony's exception. The trading houses, the European planters, the administration and — from 1936 at the latest, on the planted acreage — an African planter class holding seventy-six thousand hectares the register had never entered. Genuinely plural, and the plurality was not designed.

Trusted information. Closed to the ruled by a clause: article 6 of the press law of 1881 required a publication's responsible manager to be a French citizen, and a *sujet* was not one. But *not* wholly captured, and the exceptions matter. The Harrist church survived the state's attempt to destroy it and was still there in the 1920s when the Methodists found it. The Qur'anic schools of the north ran on their own authority. The Catholic missions carried nearly a third of the colony's schooling and answered to Rome. And the French magistrature was a separate service that audited the administration and complained about it in writing — which is why any record of the administration's abuses exists at all. That is residue in its purest form: the evidence survives because two French institutions were quarrelling over jurisdiction.

The metropolitan parliament. Genuine — and, as 1950 would show, disconnected from consequence. It could hear about Dimbokro and print the hearing. It did not act on it.

So: one monopoly captured absolutely, one genuinely plural, one closed by law with real gaps in it. That is not liberty. It is the condition under which liberty becomes *possible* if a channel

opens — and in 1944 one did, from a direction nobody in the colony controlled.

The eighteen months

Between August 1944 and May 1946 a subject population acquired more than it had acquired in the preceding half-century, and the dates are worth having in sequence because the sequence is the argument.

7 August 1944 — the French Committee of National Liberation authorises trade unions in the colonies. **8 August 1944** — the governor approves the statutes of the African planters' syndicate, one day later, and for a reason that had nothing to do with Africa: the metropolitan state had split, and one faction of it wanted a counterweight to the settlers of the other.

22 August 1945 — an ordinance establishes that overseas elections shall be held by *double collège*: a first college of French citizens and the citizens of the four Senegalese communes, a second college of *indigènes*.

Autumn 1945 — the colony elects, from that second college, its first African deputies to the Constituent Assembly in Paris.

1 March 1946 — the territory's African deputy tables a bill to abolish forced labour. **11 April 1946** — it becomes law.

25 April 1946 — the Constituent Assembly adopts the bill of the Senegalese socialist deputy Lamine Guèye. **7 May 1946** — promulgated as law no. 46-940; published on the 8th; in force from 1 June. Its operative provision is one sentence:

> *Tous les ressortissants des territoires d'outre-mer ont la qualité de citoyen au même titre que les nationaux français de la métropole ou des départements d'outre-mer.*

> All persons belonging to the overseas territories have the quality of citizen on the same footing as French nationals of the metropole or of the overseas departments.

With it went the *indigénat*, in force across the possessions since 1887 — the fifteen days executed immediately, the schedule of infractions special to natives, the *gardes-cercles*. Gone by statute.

Eighteen months. Legal unions, a vote, deputies in the sovereign assembly, the end of compulsory labour, the end of administrative summary punishment, and citizenship. None of it was won by an Ivorian counterweight, because there was no Ivorian counterweight capable of winning it. It arrived as **residue from a metropolitan quarrel** — a state fighting a war against itself and then writing a new constitution, in an assembly where the Communists and the Socialists were strong and the colonial lobby was briefly discredited by association with Vichy.

And it was real. That is the part an account written to expose the arrangement will be tempted to skip. Hundreds of thousands of people who had been liable to be marched to a plantation stopped being liable. A man who could be jailed for a fortnight by an administrator’s decision could no longer be. Those are not rhetorical improvements. They are the residue becoming rights, at a measurable date, in the lives of people who had never been asked.

The law five months later

Then, on **5 October 1946**, the same legislature instituted the *double collège* for the territorial assemblies: one electoral college for the Europeans, another for the former *indigènes*. Citizenship in May; segregated voting in October.

And the second college was not merely separate. Its franchise was capacitary — restricted by qualification, and the

qualifications were tightened by a further law of 27 August 1947 and only broadened in 1952, when the vote was extended to citizens of both sexes over twenty-one who were heads of household. The weight of the two colleges was not equal, and in some territories was grossly unequal; the ratios reported for Cameroon put dozens of second-college voters against one first-college voter, a figure this study reports as it circulates rather than as verified. Territorial assemblies across French West Africa were constituted on this basis.

Nor was the citizenship uniform. The law of May 1946 conferred the *quality* of citizen while leaving personal status differentiated: one could be a French citizen of French civil status, of Muslim status, or of customary status, governed by different private law. Only metropolitan French held the full complement of civil and political rights.

Universality of suffrage and the single college arrived on **23 June 1956**, in article 10 of the *loi-cadre* — ten years and one month after the citizenship that was supposed to have established them.

Hold the two statutes of 1946 side by side, because together they are the cleanest demonstration in this study of the difference between rhetoric and structure. In May the Republic declared that its colonial subjects were citizens on the same footing as Frenchmen. In October it provided that they would vote in a different room, on a restricted roll, for a chamber weighted against them. Both were acts of the same assembly, in the same year, in the same city. The declaration was the robe. **The electoral law was the order.**

Repression, and then the thing that worked better

Between those two dates and 1956 lies the repression of 1949 and 1950, and its shape is now legible as a two-stage answer to the same problem.

The first stage was repression. Latrille was replaced in 1948 by Péchoux, whose brief was to break the party; the leadership was arrested in February 1949 and held ten months without trial; troops fired at Bouaflé, Dimbokro and Séguéla in January and February 1950; a senator of the Republic disappeared and neither Parliament nor the courts inquired; the party was forbidden to meet. Some fifty people died.

The second stage was absorption, and it began in October 1950 when the party publicly abandoned its alliance with the Communists and turned toward co-operation with the administration. Over the following years its president entered French governments as a minister; its cadres entered the territorial and federal institutions; and by 1956 the *loi-cadre* had given the territory an executive council with African ministers running its internal affairs.

The test of a representative institution is not what powers it holds on paper but **whether an opposition career is survivable, and where its members go afterwards** — because a chamber whose critics are absorbed into office has foreclosed more completely than one whose critics are jailed, since it generates careers instead of martyrs.

By that test this colony ran both instruments in sequence on the same men within seven years, and the sequence is the mechanism. The repression of 1949–50 established what the alternative was. The absorption after 1950 then offered the men who had survived it a route that worked. Nothing was betrayed and nobody was bought in any vulgar sense: the channel

functioned exactly as a channel is supposed to, pressure released as reform, forced labour gone, ministries opened, the single college won in 1956. **That is what successful foreclosure by architecture looks like from the inside. It is indistinguishable from success, and that is why it is durable.**

Plural where, foreclosed where

The question is best asked in that form and this case answers it exactly.

Plural at the core. Metropolitan France in this period had genuinely separated monopolies: a judiciary that was not the executive, a press that was not the state, parties that could remove governments, and an assembly that had just written a constitution. Everything the colony obtained in 1944–46 came out of that plurality, as residue from its quarrels.

Foreclosed at the periphery. Inside the colony, violence was in one hand, information was closed by a status clause, and the electoral architecture of October 1946 ensured that African representation could not translate into African majorities in the bodies that governed Africans.

And the transmission between the two is the thing to name. **The colony's liberties were entirely derivative — produced by a fight in which no colonial subject was a participant, and revocable by the same legislature that produced them, as October 1946 demonstrated within five months.** The subjects were not parties to the quarrel that sheltered them. They were bystanders who found themselves standing behind a fence somebody else had built, and who then had to work very hard to keep it there.

Which raises the module's real question: why did some of it stick?

Where the monopolies were split, and where they were not

Liberty is not what an order says about itself. It is a question of how many hands hold the means of force, the sources of wealth, and the position people trust for their picture of the world. Where all three sit in one coalition there is nothing a man can stand on that the same coalition does not own, whatever the rhetoric. Where they are genuinely split among groups that can check one another, liberties appear — not because anyone intended them, but as the leavings of a quarrel. Due process starts as a baron’s guarantee against a king; free speech starts as a printer’s protection against a licenser.

In this colony the means of force were in one hand entirely, and the trusted position was closed to Africans by a rule about who could hold a newspaper licence. Wealth was genuinely split — trading houses, European planters, the administration, and an African planter class holding seventy-six thousand hectares the register had never entered — and that split was nobody’s design. There were also real gaps in the interpretive monopoly: a Harrist church the state had failed to destroy, Qur’anic schools answering to nobody, Catholic missions answering to Rome, and a French magistrature that audited the administration and put its objections in writing.

That is not liberty. It is the condition in which liberty becomes possible if a channel opens. In 1944 one did, and it opened from a direction nobody here controlled.

Everything gained between August 1944 and May 1946 — legal unions, a vote, deputies in the sovereign assembly, the end of forced labour, the end of summary administrative punishment, citizenship — came out of a French state at war with itself and then writing a constitution. Not one hour of it was won by an Ivorian counterweight, because there was no Ivorian counterweight capable of winning it. And it was real. Hundreds

of thousands of people who could be marched to a plantation stopped being liable to it. A man who could be jailed for a fortnight on an administrator’s word could not be any longer. Those are not rhetorical improvements.

Then, on 5 October 1946, the same legislature that had made these people citizens in May put them in a separate electoral college, on a restricted roll, voting for a chamber weighted against them — and it stayed that way until June 1956. The declaration was the story the Republic told about itself. The electoral law was the arrangement.

Which is the lesson worth carrying. Liberties won by a class for itself are defended by that class. Liberties that arrive from somebody else’s quarrel land as a grant, and a grant has no defender where it falls; the body that gave it can take it back five months later and nobody in the room objects. What decides whether such a thing survives is whether anyone at the receiving end picks it up and holds it. Here somebody did — a class of proprietors holding a base the arrangement had not given and could not repossess, organised since 1944, able to withhold the crop — and it spent ten years working the channel and got the single college in 1956. Where no such class exists the grant simply lapses.

And the last finding is the uncomfortable one. The right test of a representative institution is not what powers it holds on paper. It is whether an opposition career is survivable, and where its members end up. This colony ran both available answers on the same men inside seven years: the shootings and the ten months in prison first, establishing what the alternative was, and then the route into office. By 1956 the men who had been arrested in 1949 were running the territory’s internal affairs, and forced labour really was gone, and the single college really had come.

Nobody was deceived and nothing was betrayed. That is precisely the point. Foreclosure by architecture does not require

anybody to be fooled. It requires only that the survivable route run through the arrangement, and that it work — which is why it is more durable than shooting, and why it is almost impossible to tell apart from success.

A note on sources.

Instruments quoted or cited. Law no. 46-940 of 7 May 1946 is quoted for its operative provision, in the wording carried by the French reference and scholarly literature; the study has not inspected the *Journal officiel* text of 8 May 1946. Its adoption by the Constituent Assembly on 25 April 1946 and entry into force on 1 June 1946 are as that literature reports. The ordinance of 22 August 1945 establishing the *double collège*, the law of 5 October 1946 instituting the double college for the territorial assemblies, its modification by the laws of 27 August 1947 and 6 February 1952 (the latter extending the franchise to citizens of both sexes over twenty-one who were heads of household), and law no. 56-619 of 23 June 1956 — the *loi-cadre* — whose article 10 established universal suffrage and abolished the double college outside Algeria, are cited from the Digithèque des matériaux juridiques et politiques (Université de Perpignan) and the standard French reference literature. The law of 11 April 1946 abolishing obligatory labour is cited by date; its tabling on 1 March 1946 by the territory's African deputy follows the reference literature.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship and reference literature. The composition of the two electoral colleges, the organisation of the territorial assemblies on that basis, the persistence of differentiated personal status under a common citizenship, and the ten-year gap between the citizenship law and effective universal suffrage follow the French and Senegalese scholarly literature on colonial citizenship, including the assessment of Ndiouga Benga and the standard accounts of the *loi Lamine*

Guèye's limited execution. The 1949–50 repression and its sequel are as established earlier in this study. The party's break with the Communists in October 1950 and the subsequent entry of its leadership into French ministries and, after 1956, into territorial executive office, follow the standard political-historical literature; the details of that trajectory are not developed here.

Contested and unverified. The relative weight of the two electoral colleges varied by territory and this study has **not** established the ratio for Côte d'Ivoire. The figure circulating for Cameroon — of the order of thirty second-college voters to one first-college voter — comes from polemical rather than scholarly sources and is reported here only because a reader will encounter it; it should not be treated as this study's finding, and the Ivorian ratio is a gap that ought to be filled from the electoral laws and the registration returns. The characterisation of the colonial lobby as briefly discredited by association with Vichy rests on the standard narrative and carries the caution entered against it elsewhere in this study.

A limitation of method. This module judges each counterweight genuine or captured on the structural evidence assembled earlier in this study rather than on a separate examination of each institution. The magistrature in particular deserves better than it gets here: the judgement that it functioned as a real check rests on the prosecutors' complaints quoted above, which establish that it *objected*, not that its objections changed anything. A study of the *parquet*'s actual effect on administrative practice in this colony would test one of this module's supporting claims and has not been attempted.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 10

TWENTY LAWYERS, TEN DOCTORS

Module 10 · Change and Continuity — the crack that opened the floor, why it opened four thousand kilometres from this colony, and why a territory that had cost France nothing since 1950 was released by a war it had no part in

Where to look

Peasants do not overthrow functioning state apparatus. This one functioned thoroughly at the base — the *indigénat* reaching the individual through an appointed chief, the census fixing who owed what, the trees fixing who could not leave — and what happened at Bouaflé and Dimbokro when people tested it is recorded above. Fifty-odd dead, a party banned, and the apparatus intact.

So the question is not what the governed did. It is which crack opened in the hierarchy: fracture, exhaustion, conquest by a rival elite, or a surplus of claimants with nowhere to go. And in a colony the hierarchy to examine is not the one in the colony. It is the metropolitan one, because that is where the warrant is issued and where the cost of holding is priced.

France in 1958 had not lost the capacity to hold this territory. It had eight hundred and forty men here in 1908 and it had a good deal more than that in 1958; it faced no insurgency in Côte d’Ivoire, no maquis, no strikes worth the name since 1950; the colony was solvent, productive and administered by a party whose leader sat in the French cabinet. Nothing in the local balance of force had changed. **What changed was the price**

France was willing to pay to hold colonies in general, and it was reset somewhere else.

The repricing, dated

The sequence runs entirely outside this territory.

1940–44. The metropolitan state is defeated, occupied and split. That split had already done its work here: it opened the eighteen months in which a subject population acquired unions, a vote and citizenship, because one faction of the French state wanted a counterweight against another.

1946–54, Indochina. Eight years of war ending at Dien Bien Phu on 7 May 1954 — a defeat by a colonial army in a set-piece battle, which is the single most expensive kind of thing an empire can be shown to be capable of losing.

From 1 November 1954, Algeria. A war that would not end, in a territory legally part of France, consuming conscripts and money on a scale the Indochina war had not.

23 June 1956, the *loi-cadre*. Universal suffrage, the single college, and internal executive government for each territory separately. This is the accounting decision. France, having just discovered in Indochina what holding a colony against its population costs, chose to devolve internal administration in the territories that were not fighting it — and to do so *territory by territory*, which mattered enormously, as this module will come to.

13 May 1958, Algiers. The settler and army revolt that brought down the Fourth Republic and returned de Gaulle to power.

28 September 1958, the referendum. Yes to the Community, or immediate independence and the end of French assistance.

The shape is unmistakable. The floor did not crack here. **The enforcer retained every soldier and wrote off the reach**,

and the write-off is dateable, and it is an accounting event rather than a military one. What the Algerian war did was not defeat France in West Africa. It made the *imperial average price* of holding territory intolerable, and the average was then applied to a colony that was individually cheap.

That is this module's first finding and it generalises: in an empire, the cost column that decides a territory's fate is not the territory's own. It is the imperial one, set at the margin by the most expensive case and applied to all. Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea were released by the same event, in which neither had any part. A quiet colony and a turbulent one were priced identically because the price was made in Algiers.

What the local elite's actions actually did

Here the case corrects an intuition that would otherwise be natural.

The energy of a nationalist movement matters, and it does — but through the metropolitan ledger rather than directly. The Ivorian case shows that this can run in either direction, and here it ran in the direction opposite to Algeria's.

After October 1950 the territory's party abandoned its Communist alliance and turned to co-operation. Its leader entered the French government as a minister in 1956, the first African to do so. The colony was, from that point, the cheapest thing France possessed in West Africa: no war, rising exports, a party organisation that delivered order, and an interlocutor sitting in the cabinet room. Every action the Ivorian elite took between 1950 and 1958 **lowered** France's cost of holding Côte d'Ivoire.

And Côte d'Ivoire got the same outcome as Guinea, three months later in form and two years later in substance. Which establishes the point precisely: the Ivorian elite's conduct had almost no

effect on *whether* independence came, because that was decided by the imperial average. What it determined was **the terms**.

The Ivorian ledger, read at every entry

Why then did this territory vote yes at ninety-nine per cent when Guinea voted no at ninety-five?

The seed of this study proposed that the answer lay in a propertied class whose ledger read *reform and stay*. Nine modules of evidence permit a more exact answer, and it has four entries, all pointing the same way.

The fiscal entry. Côte d'Ivoire was the principal foreign-exchange earner of French West Africa, and the federation's services and buildings sat at Dakar, staffed in overwhelming majority by cadres from Senegal, Dahomey and the Soudan, paid for out of Ivorian receipts. The phrase that carried the grievance was that the territory should not remain *la vache à lait de l'AOF* — the milk cow of French West Africa. This is why the Ivorian position was anti-federalist before it was anything else, why the territorial route of the 1956 *loi-cadre* suited it, and why in 1959 its leader worked to break the Mali Federation. A rich territory in a poor federation reads the federation as a transfer, and the *loi-cadre*'s territory-by-territory design had already given it the alternative.

The cadres entry, which is the schools policy coming due. Asked what an independent state would be staffed with, the territory's leader answered with an inventory: *nous avons en Côte d'Ivoire 20 avocats, 10 médecins et deux…* — we have in Côte d'Ivoire twenty lawyers, ten doctors and two… The sentence is truncated in the source available to this study and the study will not complete it. It does not need completing. Twenty lawyers. Ten doctors. That is the direct and calculable consequence of sixty years of not building schools — a Ponty output of some two thousand for eight territories across half a

century, no secondary school in this colony until the late 1940s — presented back to the arrangement, at the moment of decision, as a reason not to leave it. **The colonial order's refusal to form a population produced, sixty years later, a national elite that could count its own professionals on its fingers and drew the obvious conclusion about the cost of running a state without them.** Whatever else it is, it is not an accident, and it is not a compliment to the arrangement.

The property entry. Twenty thousand planters held trees, in a market whose prices were supported and whose outlet was France. A standing crop is the one asset that cannot be carried, and it was also the one asset the arrangement could not repossess. The combination produces a very specific ledger: the trees were safe either way, and what rupture threatened was not the property but the *market*. Guinea's answer to that question was to find another market. This class had no reason to look for one.

The trajectory entry. Twelve years of working the channel had paid: forced labour gone in 1946, the *indigénat* gone, the marketing margin captured in 1945, the single college won in 1956, a ministry in Paris. A class that has been rewarded twelve times for staying inside an arrangement does not need a doctrine to prefer staying inside it. It needs only arithmetic.

Four entries, one direction. The ledger read *stay*, and it read *stay* for reasons the arrangement itself had manufactured — the fiscal position by the federation's design, the shortage of cadres by the schools policy, the property by the planting orders of the 1920s and thirties, the habit by the concessions of 1946.

The choice, held alongside the ledger

And a man chose. This study will not dissolve that into structure, because the structure does not determine it.

The leadership of the Ivorian party campaigned for yes, and campaigned across the federation for yes, and the party's discipline was the instrument by which most of French West Africa voted yes. It could have gone the other way: the rival African party's congress at Cotonou had adopted immediate independence on 27 July 1958, and the Ivorian leader spent that summer obtaining a revision of the constitutional text instead. A published address to the territory on the eve of the vote survives in the Library of Congress and is, on its catalogue description, exactly what one would expect — a path to independence, with strong ties to France retained.

Two things about the ninety-nine per cent must be said plainly. First, it is not a measurement of Ivorian opinion. By 1958 the party and the administration were the same apparatus in this territory, and elsewhere in the federation the management was overt: in Niger a new governor was installed to support the RDA's position by every means, including blocking communications, against a party campaigning for no. A referendum run by the men who want one answer produces that answer. Second, and against the temptation to dismiss it entirely: Guinea's ninety-five per cent no was produced by the same kind of apparatus in the opposite direction, and nobody doubts that it expressed something real. Both figures measure the alignment of an organised party with a population, and in both cases the party had spent a decade earning that alignment. What neither figure measures is what individual Ivorians or Guineans would have said in a secret ballot with two credible campaigns.

So: the ledger read stay, the leader read the ledger correctly, and he also had his own position in it — a canton chief, a planter, a French minister, whose personal default question had the same answer as his class's. The honest statement is that the structure made yes overwhelmingly likely and the man made it certain,

and that separating the two is not possible from the outside and probably was not possible from the inside either.

What the rupture installed

Autonomous republic within the Community in December 1958. Prime minister in 1959. Full independence on 7 August 1960; the United Nations on 20 September. The Conseil de l'Entente assembled with Niger, Upper Volta and Dahomey in 1959 as the anti-federal alternative to the Mali Federation.

And then the closing question: did the change install plurality, or reload the same shape under new names?

It reloaded. The party that had been the planters' syndicate became the only legal party, and no opposition party was lawful in Côte d'Ivoire until 1990. The single legal party, the president elected unopposed for seven consecutive terms, the absence of any channel the apex did not own — that is the foreclosure of the colonial electoral architecture completed, and completed by the men who had won the single college.

But it reloaded in a specific and consequential shape, and this is where the pair-case earns its keep. **The foreclosure after 1960 was political and not economic.** The planters kept their trees; the market kept functioning; the property that had never been in the register was never nationalised; the economy roughly doubled between 1960 and 1980. Guinea's foreclosure was political *and* economic — a single party plus collectivised agriculture, banned private trade, a currency the world would not take, and by the end an exodus counted in the millions.

Which yields the second finding: **the bargain of 1945 did not break down at the end. It ran to its conclusion.** The partnership ran to its logical terminus, in which the partner bought out the grantor and took over the arrangement. And the arrangement he took over was the one he had spent fourteen

years being admitted to — which is why what followed preserved the property structure exactly and foreclosed the political one exactly. A class that had demanded admission rather than abolition, on the evidence of its own demands and its own founding circular, got admission, and then closed the door behind itself.

Where the crack actually opened

Peasants do not overthrow a working state apparatus. This one worked: a penal regime that reached the individual through an appointed chief, a census that fixed what he owed, a tree that fixed where he had to stay. When it was tested at Bouaflé and Dimbokro in 1950 the result was fifty-odd dead and the apparatus intact.

So the question is which crack opened in the hierarchy — and in a colony the hierarchy to look at is not the one in the colony. France in 1958 had not lost the capacity to hold this territory. There was no insurgency here, no maquis, nothing serious since 1950; the colony was solvent, its exports rising, its party delivering order, its leader sitting in the French cabinet. Nothing in the local balance of force had moved an inch.

What had moved was the price France was willing to pay to hold colonies at all, and it was set four thousand kilometres away. Dien Bien Phu in May 1954 showed what it costs to hold a country against its population. Algeria from November 1954 went on showing it, without stopping, in a territory that was legally France. The devolution of 1956 was the accounting decision that followed, and the revolt in Algiers in May 1958 brought down the Republic that had made it.

The floor here did not crack. **The enforcer kept every soldier and wrote off the reach**, and the writing-off has a date and is an accounting event rather than a military one. Which yields the general point: where one power holds many territories, the price

at which any of them is valued is set by the most expensive, and quiet colonies are released by wars they took no part in. Côte d’Ivoire and Guinea were let go by the same event, and neither had any part in it.

That has an odd consequence for how a movement’s conduct should be read. Everything the Ivorian party did between 1950 and 1958 *lowered* France’s cost of holding this colony — the opposite of what the Algerians were doing — and it got independence on the same schedule. What its conduct bought was not the outcome. It was the terms: the transition, the retained ties, the civil servants who stayed, the market that kept running.

Then the ledger itself, which read one way at every entry. A territory that earned the federation’s foreign exchange and resented paying for an administration housed in Dakar and staffed from elsewhere. A propertied class holding trees that were safe either way, in a market that was not. Twelve years of evidence that working the channel paid and breaking it produced Dimbokro. And the answer given when someone asked what an independent state would be staffed with: twenty lawyers, ten doctors.

That last is the sharpest thing in this study. Sixty years of not building schools produced a leadership that could count its own professionals on its fingers, and the count was then offered, at the hour of decision, as a reason to stay. A conqueror who declines to form a population does not merely leave it unformed. He leaves it unable to afford his absence, and its own leaders make the argument on his behalf.

The ninety-nine per cent should not be read as a measurement of what Ivorians thought. By 1958 the party and the administration were one apparatus here, and elsewhere in the federation the management was overt. But nor should it be dismissed: Guinea’s ninety-five per cent came from the same kind of machine

pointing the other way, and nobody doubts it expressed something. Both figures record how completely an organised party had aligned with a population over a decade. Neither records what anyone would have said in a secret ballot between two real campaigns.

So a class read its position correctly and a man read the class correctly, and he was also in it — canton chief, planter, French minister, with a personal answer identical to his class's. The structure made *yes* overwhelmingly likely; the man made it certain; and separating the two is not possible from outside and was probably not possible from inside either.

What followed reloaded the shape. The planters' syndicate became the only legal party and remained the only legal one until 1990. But it reloaded in a particular way: the foreclosure was political and not economic. The trees stayed with the men who had planted them. A class that had spent fourteen years demanding admission got admission, and then closed the door behind it.

A note on sources.

Primary sources identified but not exploited. Félix Houphouët-Boigny, *Discours* (Abidjan: Ministère de l'intérieur, Service de l'information, 1958), twenty pages, Library of Congress control number 2008700203, held in the African Section pamphlet collection and digitised through the World Digital Library, which records that the Library is unaware of any copyright or other restriction on it. This is an address delivered shortly before the September 1958 referendum. **This study has not read it**, having been able to retrieve only the catalogue record; it is the single most valuable unexploited primary source for this module, it is free of known restrictions, and any revision of this module should begin with it. Nothing in the text above is drawn from its

contents, and the characterisation of its argument is the Library's catalogue summary, not this study's reading.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship and reference literature. The fiscal grievance — Côte d'Ivoire as principal foreign-exchange earner of the federation, the location of federal services at Dakar, and the predominance of Senegalese, Dahomean and Soudanese cadres paid from Ivorian receipts — follows the Ivorian scholarly literature on the antagonism between the Ivorian and Guinean leaderships, which cites the work of A. Tirefort; the phrase about the milk cow of French West Africa is quoted from that literature as the leader's own and is given here as a short reported phrase rather than as a verified text. The statement counting twenty lawyers and ten doctors is quoted from the same article, which gives it as his words; **the quotation is truncated in the source and this study has quoted only the part that is legible there.** The chronology of the referendum, de Gaulle's August 1958 African tour and the alternative he posed, the PRA congress at Cotonou of 27 July 1958, the revision of the constitutional text, the administrative management of the vote in Niger, and the reported results — approximately ninety-nine per cent yes in Côte d'Ivoire on a near-complete count, and 95.2 per cent no in Guinea on a turnout of 85.5 per cent — follow the French audiovisual archive of the period, the standard reference literature, and the Guinean sources. The post-referendum chronology — autonomous republic in December 1958, prime minister in 1959, independence on 7 August 1960, United Nations membership on 20 September 1960, the Conseil de l'Entente of 1959 and the breaking of the Mali Federation — follows the standard reference literature. The single-party character of the state until 1990 and the doubling of the economy between 1960 and 1980 likewise.

Contested and cautionary. The referendum percentages are official results of a vote administered by the party and

administration that wanted the outcome, in both territories, and this module has said so in the text rather than in a footnote because it bears on the argument. The Ivorian turnout and register figures have not been examined here and should be, since this study has not established the electoral arithmetic of the territory. The count of twenty lawyers and ten doctors is a politician's figure in a political argument and has not been checked against any professional register; it is used here as evidence of what was said and believed, not as a measurement of the professional class, and the underlying scarcity is independently established by the schooling record.

A limitation of standpoint. This part of the study explains a negative — why this territory did not do what Guinea did — and negatives are the easiest thing in history to over-explain. Four entries in the Ivorian ledger have been set out and all four point one way, which is either strong evidence or a sign that the study has stopped looking. Two counter-considerations are recorded here in fairness and not developed: that a substantial current of Ivorian opinion, including within the party, favoured a federal rather than territorial route and lost the argument rather than never having made it; and that the yes campaign was conducted by an apparatus with every advantage, so the ledger's clarity in retrospect may partly be the clarity of a result rather than of a choice. Both must be held.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 11

THOSE WHO GROAN UPON THE ROADS

Module 11 · The Grim Accounting — what the arrangement cost the people who lived under it, why the metabolic note this collection usually finds never came due here, and the different debt that did

Two ledgers, and a third that is usually the largest

This collection keeps a double ledger and it keeps it in both columns. But the accounting of a conquest has three entries, not two, and the third is regularly the biggest.

The first is the sword: the people killed in the taking and in the holding. The second is the arrangement's ordinary running cost to those who lived under it — the labour taken, the years spent, the things not built. The third is the one that does not look like violence at all. A developed order raises a population above the land's unassisted carrying capacity by coordination: irrigation kept in repair, granaries, seed distribution, roads that move food from a surplus district to a hungry one, courts that make a debt collectable. Break the coordination and the population that the coordination was feeding does not simply return to an earlier equilibrium. It dies down to the new one. The note comes due, and it is paid in famine, and it dwarfs the sword.

Côte d'Ivoire is a case where the third entry is nearly blank, and understanding *why* is the module's principal work — because the reason is not that France was gentle.

Why the metabolic note never came due

The classic metabolic debt requires a dense, intensively farmed, coordination-dependent population. This colony had nothing of the kind.

The territory held roughly two and a half million people at mid-century, at a density on the order of eight to the square kilometre. That is not a country living at the edge of what its land will bear. It is a country with more forest than farmers, cultivated by systems — shifting cultivation, long fallow, dispersed settlement — that required no central coordination whatever and would have survived the disappearance of any government at all. The political version of this fact has already been set out: no apex, no tax machine, no granary state, no irrigation bureaucracy. The economic version follows from it. There was no coordination surplus to destroy, because nobody had built one.

So the famines this collection has counted elsewhere — the ones produced when a conqueror takes over a dense hydraulic or fiscal system and then mismanages it, or dismantles the institutions that were moving grain — do not appear in this record, and their absence should not be entered as a credit. **France did not preserve a functioning metabolism here. There was not one to preserve.**

And this is where the frame has to be turned around, because the second half of the usual pattern does not hold either. Where a conqueror inherits a going concern and keeps it, the metabolic disruption is small and the cost is mostly the sword. That is a real pattern and it fits the cases with chairs. It does not fit this one, because — as nine modules have established — there was no going concern to keep. What France did instead was *impose* a coordination on a population that had done without one, and the imposition had its own metabolic consequences. They were simply not caloric.

The debt that did come due

Concentration. The terms are in the governor's own hand: the Akoué dispersed across two hundred and forty-seven encampments, regrouped into seventeen villages sited beside roads; the Ngban brought down to a handful along the staging route; and the maintenance clause, that one must go on for years seeking out and destroying the encampments built anew. Angoulvant thought dispersal a symptom of idleness and an obstacle to administration. In a forest with tsetse, endemic malaria, and no medicine, dispersal is also a survival strategy — low density interrupts transmission, and moving away from a sick place is what people without a doctor do instead of medicine. Concentrating a forest population into permanent aligned villages beside a road is therefore not a neutral administrative tidying. It is an epidemiological intervention, made by men who did not know they were making one.

Displacement across ecological zones. The policy and its instrument have already been described: a colony abolished in 1932, some two million people attached to this one, a governor writing in 1933 for fifty thousand workers for cocoa and as many again for other crops, and *villages de colonisation voltaïque* planted in the Gouro country to hold them. What the epidemiological literature has since established about that transfer is precise and grim. Upper Volta in the first half of the twentieth century was the territory of French West Africa worst affected by human African trypanosomiasis — sleeping sickness — and the Koudougou region, one of the most populous sources of the migration, was among the worst affected within it. The administration moved people from a savanna epidemic zone into forest that was tsetse habitat, and settled them in new villages along the roads it was building. The foci that resulted are named after the villages that were founded: the sleeping-sickness focus at Vavoua, whose Mossi villages were still, decades later, the places where new cases clustered, and whose survivors were

still being detected in Burkina Faso in the twenty-first century as cases arriving from Côte d'Ivoire.

So the metabolic entry for this colony is not a famine. It is a disease geography that the arrangement created, by concentrating dispersed people and importing distant ones into an ecology neither group had lived in. That is a real debt, it was paid in bodies, and no colonial ledger recorded it because the deaths occurred years later and in the wrong administrative category.

The sword, and the figure that does not exist

Now the first entry, and here the module must be blunt about what the record contains.

For the conquest, this study has exactly one set of casualty figures and already quoted: twenty-two killed including three officers and sixty-one wounded including three Europeans, over sixteen months, published by the governor who ordered the operations. **That is a count of the conquerors' losses.** Angoulvant gives no figure whatever for African dead — not for the columns, not for the villages burned, not for the internments at Port-Étienne whose climate he noted differed appreciably from the forest zone. He records the ten thousand and more rifles taken, the hundred thousand francs collected at Morénou, the two hundred and forty-seven encampments destroyed. He does not record the people. The absence is not an oversight; it is what the accounting was for.

For the repression of 1949–50 the figure is of the order of fifty dead, with a wounded figure in circulation that this study declined to adopt.

For the forced labour, and this is the largest single item, **no reliable figure for this colony exists, and this study will not invent one.** The famous numbers belong elsewhere: the Congo-

Océan railway in French Equatorial Africa, which Albert Londres wrote about in *Terre d'Ébène* in 1929, and of which the saying was one death for every sleeper laid — an exaggeration, on the historians' assessment, over a mortality nonetheless reckoned in tens of thousands. Those are AEF's dead. **They must not be transferred to this colony, and the temptation to do so is exactly the kind of borrowing this project forbids.** What can be said about Côte d'Ivoire is narrower and still damning:

That the requisition of labour for distant sites was standard, and that Voltaics were among those requisitioned into the forest worksites here.

That the colonial administration itself debated, in its own correspondence, the risk of depopulation from recruitment quotas and the failure of officials to respect them — which is to say the men running the system thought it capable of emptying districts.

That thousands of people voted on the question with their feet, walking to the Gold Coast rather than be recruited, in numbers the administration admitted it could not count. A revealed preference of that scale is evidence about conditions that no official return supplies.

And one further item, from the period of penetration: the historians of French West Africa record that in the early years populations were subjected to raids for porters, seized sometimes by force, and deported in some cases hundreds or thousands of kilometres from home.

The words in the chamber

The best single description of the cost is in the parliamentary record, spoken in 1946 by the territory's own deputy in the debate on the bill he had tabled:

> *Le défenseur que je suis de ceux qui gémissent par milliers sur les routes, devant des gardes porteurs de chicotes, sur les plantations ou dans les coupes de bois, arrachés à leur foyer, à leur propriété, regrette de ne pouvoir trouver les mots justes pour dépeindre comme il convient la souffrance…*
>
> The defender that I am of those who groan by the thousands upon the roads, before guards carrying whips, on the plantations or in the timber cuts, torn from their hearths and from their property, regrets that he cannot find the right words to depict as it deserves the suffering…

Three locations — the roads, the plantations, the timber cuts — and the *chicotte* in the hand of the guard, which is the *garde-cercle* of the villages seen from below. The speech is evidence of what was happening and it is also, unavoidably, evidence about the speaker: the man describing men torn from their property was, on the property qualification in its founding circular, the president of a body that admitted only those who had some.

The credit column, kept honestly

The method requires the other column and it is not empty.

Medicine. A recent study built on a new dataset of official morbidity returns from colonial medical reports across both territories finds that the French administration in Côte d’Ivoire ran an earlier and more elaborate smallpox vaccination programme than the neighbouring British colony, and addressed several diseases including yellow fever more actively than Ghana did. Smallpox campaigns, on that evidence, outran everything else the colonial health services attempted. That is real, it saved lives, and it should be entered. It should also be read for what it was: compulsory vaccination administered by the same apparatus, through the same appointed chiefs, that levied the tax and furnished the labour draft — and directed at a disease

that threatened the workforce and the European population alike.

Infrastructure. A railway from the coast to Bobo-Dioulasso, a wharf, a port, roads. Built substantially with requisitioned labour, and built to move exports, and used afterwards by everyone.

The crop economy, and the property in it. This is the entry that distinguishes this colony from most others in this collection. Whatever else the arrangement did, it left behind an African propertied class of some tens of thousands holding a real asset — seventy-six thousand hectares of cocoa in African hands by 1936 and far more by 1960 — and, unlike the mineral colonies, that wealth was held by cultivators rather than by concessionaires. This was a by-product of the state's own planting orders and its refusal to build a land register, not a gift. It was nonetheless real, and it is the reason the country entered independence with something.

Population. It grew, substantially, across the colonial period and after. That is worth entering and worth immediately qualifying: population grew across most of West Africa in the same decades, including in territories under different administrations and none, and demographic growth is evidence about disease ecology, migration and food supply rather than about the merits of a government.

What was paid, and what was not counted

The largest cost of a conquest is usually not the sword. It is what happens when a dense population that had been fed by coordination — irrigation kept in repair, granaries, grain moved from a surplus district to a hungry one — loses the coordination and dies down to what the land yields unassisted. That bill dwarfs the fighting wherever it falls.

It did not fall here, and the reason is not that France was gentle. This territory held something like two and a half million people at eight to the square kilometre as late as 1950, farming by long fallow and shifting cultivation in systems that needed no central authority and would have survived the disappearance of any government at all. There was no coordination surplus to destroy because nobody had built one. The absence of famine in this record is a fact about the country, not a credit to the administration.

But the other half of that pattern does not hold either. Where a conqueror inherits a working system and keeps it, the disruption is small. France inherited nothing here and kept nothing. What it did instead was *impose* an order on people who had done without one, and the imposition had costs of its own — not caloric but epidemiological.

Two hundred and forty-seven Akoué encampments were emptied into seventeen villages beside a road, with a standing instruction to keep destroying the ones people rebuilt. To the governor, dispersal was idleness and an obstacle to administration. In a forest with tsetse and no medicine it is also a way of staying alive: low density interrupts transmission, and moving away from a sick place is what people do who have no doctor. And the transfers from the north moved populations out of the territory of French West Africa worst afflicted by sleeping sickness — from among its most affected districts — into forest that was tsetse habitat, and settled them in new villages along the new roads. The disease focus at Vavoua is named for the villages that were founded, and Burkina Faso was still detecting cases arriving from Côte d’Ivoire in this century. That is a real debt, it was paid in bodies, and no colonial ledger recorded it, because the deaths fell years later and in the wrong administrative category.

On the sword itself the record is close to silent, and the silence is the finding. The governor who conducted the pacification

published his own losses to the individual — twenty-two killed of whom three were officers, sixty-one wounded of whom three were Europeans — and the rifles confiscated to the unit, and the francs collected to the hundred, and the encampments destroyed to the number. He gave no figure at all for African dead. That is not a gap in the archive. It is what the archive was made to do, and a study working from it should say so rather than fill the silence with an estimate.

So this module has given none. No mortality figure exists for forced labour in this colony that can be stood behind; the famous numbers belong to the Congo–Océan in a different federation and borrowing them would be exactly the kind of theft this project forbids. What can be said is narrower. That men were requisitioned for distant sites and northerners sent into the forest works. That the administration debated in its own correspondence whether recruitment quotas were emptying districts. That thousands walked to the Gold Coast rather than be taken, in numbers officials admitted they could not count — which is evidence about conditions that no return supplies. And that in the early years people were seized for porterage and moved hundreds of miles from home.

The credit column is real and belongs in the same account. Smallpox campaigns run earlier and more thoroughly here than across the border in the British colony, and more attention to yellow fever — compulsory, delivered through the same chiefs who took the tax and the labour, and directed at diseases that threatened the workforce, but real, and lives were saved by it. A railway, a port, roads, built largely by requisitioned men and used afterwards by everyone. A crop economy that left tens of thousands of African cultivators owning a genuine asset, which is more than most colonies left behind.

And then the entry that no one thought to make. Sixty-seven years of administration in one of the richest territories in French West Africa produced twenty lawyers and ten doctors. There is

no famine in this ledger and no massacre on the scale this collection has counted elsewhere. What there is instead is an opportunity cost compounded across three generations — a population not formed, not registered, not taught, and not treated except where a disease threatened the work. It should be entered in the same column as the dead, because it was charged to the same people.

A note on sources.

Quoted exactly. The passage from the 1946 debate on the abolition of forced labour is quoted as reproduced in the scholarly public-history literature on the relation between the abolition of slavery and colonial forced labour published in *The Conversation*; it is a French parliamentary speech and therefore a public document, but **this study has not verified it against the *Journal officiel* debates and the quotation is truncated in the source consulted.** Only the legible portion is given. Angoulvant's figures are as quoted earlier in this study from the same volume.

Paraphrased, from modern scholarship. The epidemiological history of the Voltaic transfers — Upper Volta as the territory of French West Africa worst affected by human African trypanosomiasis, Koudougou as among the most affected and most populous source regions, the administration's orchestration of mass transfers to the Ivorian forest zone for public works and for coffee and cocoa, the establishment of Mossi colonisation villages, and the subsequent identification of the Vavoua focus and the continued detection of cases in Burkina Faso arriving from Côte d'Ivoire — follows the study of the epidemiological itinerary between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire published in *Parasite* (2012), which rests in turn on S. Bi Zan's thesis on colonial public-works policy in Côte d'Ivoire, 1900–1940. The population figure of about 2.6 million at roughly eight per square

kilometre in 1950 is from that same study. The comparative colonial health finding — earlier and more elaborate French smallpox campaigns and greater attention to yellow fever in Côte d'Ivoire than in Ghana, on a newly constructed dataset of official morbidity returns, circa 1900–1955 — follows A. C. E. Vrooman's study published in *PLoS ONE* (2025). The general characterisation of forced labour in French West Africa, the two-week annual limit on *prestations*, the requisition of Voltaics for Ivorian forest sites, the early raiding for porters and long-distance deportation, and the administration's own internal debate over depopulation risk and unrespected recruitment quotas, follow the work of Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, Babacar Fall, Issiaka Mandé, Anthony Asiwaju and the demographic-historical literature on circular migration in West Africa, together with the study of imperial enumeration published in *Vingtième Siècle* (2007).

Figures deliberately not given, and one rejected. No mortality figure is offered for forced labour in Côte d'Ivoire, because this study has found none it can stand behind. The Congo-Océan figures — the saying of one death per sleeper, reported by Albert Londres in *Terre d'Ébène* (1929) and assessed by historians as an exaggeration over a toll nonetheless in the tens of thousands — belong to French Equatorial Africa and are cited here only to be excluded from this colony's account. The claim circulating in the popular French reference literature that the Baoulé population fell from about a million and a half to about a hundred and sixty thousand within a decade of the conquest is **rejected**: it is attributed to unnamed estimates, it is inconsistent with every colonial population count for the territory as a whole, and it would imply a mortality larger than the colony's recorded population. It is named here so that a reader who meets it knows this study considered and refused it.

A standing limitation. Every figure in the debit column of this module derives either from the administration that inflicted the

costs or from the political movement that opposed it. There is no independent enumeration of the colonial period in this territory and there cannot now be one. What this module offers is a structure and an argument about where the costs fell, with the numerical entries kept deliberately thin. A reader who wants the arithmetic will have to go to the *cercle* reports in Abidjan and Aix-en-Provence, and should expect to find, as this study found, careful counts of rifles.

Part of the collection Patterns of Power. Tested, never revealed.

PATTERNS OF POWER · FRENCH CÔTE D'IVOIRE — MODULE 12

ONE ARTICLE, TWO COUNTRIES

Module 12 · Convergence and Divergence — reading the case against the others in this collection, testing the crop hypothesis against the pair, gathering the revisions, and answering the strongest defence of this arrangement without flinching

Where the study began, and where it has arrived

The Landscape opened on a single article of a single decree.

On 10 March 1893 the Republic organised three colonies, and in one sentence apiece it named the chair through which each would be ruled: the Fuuta Jalon for the governor of French Guinea, the States of Kong for the governor of Côte d’Ivoire, with the States of Samory reserved to another jurisdiction altogether.

One signature. One afternoon. Two colonies, constituted in identical form by identical words, differing in nothing an administrator would have thought material.

Sixty-five years later, on 28 September 1958, one of them voted yes at something like ninety-nine per cent and the other voted no at ninety-five, and the two roads that followed are as far apart as the social world ever puts two countries with the same metropole, the same currency, the same law, the same federation and a shared border. This module asks what actually separated them, and what the case teaches.

What this order shares with the others

Almost everything, and by position logic rather than by design.

The floor. Eight hundred and forty men, budgetarily and not actually, holding a territory two-thirds the size of France by means of a penal regime that could fine and jail without procedure. This collection has seen this arithmetic repeatedly: a conquest is affordable not because the conqueror is strong but because the conquered are not organised to be simultaneously expensive.

The bargain. The bargain. A conqueror who cannot afford to govern a country directly has one obvious economy: find the men it already obeys and pay them to go on collecting. France found almost nobody here who qualified, so it appointed men and called them chiefs — and then, forty years later, struck a quite different bargain with a class it had not appointed and could not remove. The same economy run twice, on two tiers, with opposite results, is what this case adds.

The robe. *Paix — Organisation — Richesse*, signed by Galliéni, over a book cataloguing internments, war fines and forced village regrouping. This collection has this pattern in every case it has examined: the legitimating word is applied precisely to the act it must cover, and its sincerity in the audience that funds the enterprise is what makes the covering work.

No first innocent order. There was no baseline anywhere in this territory: Gyaman conquered by Asante in the 1730s or 1740s, Kong a Dyula conquest of about 1710 over a Senufo and Tyefo population, the Baoulé an Akan conquest that migrated west and displaced what it found, the Kru pushed toward the sea by Mande and Akan pressure. What was distinctive here was only that nothing had cooled: France arrived where the newest conquest was still smoking, and could have watched the loop it was about to enter if it had cared to look.

The distance. The gap between what was said in Paris and what was done here was held open across four thousand kilometres — and, this colony's own contribution, held open even when the two ends met on the floor of the National Assembly.

None of this needs a hidden hand and the study has proposed none. It needs only that a large number of men each defended his own position, and that the positions were arranged so that defending them defended the whole.

Divergence: what separated the pair

Now the comparison the study was built to make, and the honest version is more complicated than the seed proposed and still supports it.

The crop. This is the hypothesis and it survives. Côte d'Ivoire's export economy was built on cocoa and coffee — perennials that a family can plant with a hoe and that bear for decades. The administration *ordered* peasants to plant them for its own receipts; the result by 1936 was 76,371 hectares in African hands against 11,311 European; a standing tree is the one asset a man cannot carry across a border; and the register that would have made it seizable was never built. Guinea's export economy ran on bananas — substantially a plantation crop needing capital, rail and shipping — on coffee and pineapple, and above all, from the late colonial period, on bauxite: a mineral rent extracted by foreign capital and paid to whoever holds the state. **Neither bananas nor bauxite builds an African propertied class. Cocoa does, and did.**

And therefore the counter-elite formed around a different thing in each place. Guinea's formed through the trade union — the communist-led CGT, the seventy-day general strike of 1953, a mass movement of *workers*. Côte d'Ivoire's formed through a syndicate of proprietors that wrote its property

qualification into a circular: refuse as a member any African without two hectares of coffee or three of cocoa in bearing.

Here is the mechanism the pair yields, and it is the study's central comparative finding. **A counter-elite formed around property demands *admission* to the schedule — equal prices, equal premiums, equal access to labour — and admission is obtainable inside the arrangement, so its ledger reads *stay*. A counter-elite formed around labour demands *control* of the terms of employment, and control requires the state, so its ledger reads *take the state*.** The confirming evidence is as harsh as it could be: five years after abolishing forced labour, the Ivorian planters' syndicate joined the European settlers to found SIAMO and channel labour in by other means. What that class had objected to was never the labour system. It was exclusion from it.

Two other variables point the same way and must be named rather than hidden.

The fiscal position. Côte d'Ivoire was the federation's principal foreign-exchange earner, resentful of paying for a federal administration housed at Dakar and staffed largely from Senegal, Dahomey and the Soudan — *la vache à lait de l'AOF*. A rich territory in a poor federation reads federation as transfer, and the 1956 *loi-cadre*'s territory-by-territory design had already handed it the exit. Guinea was not in that position.

The loaded memory. Guinea supplied a conqueror who could be claimed as an ancestor and a resistance to be inherited by blood. Côte d'Ivoire's supplied the same man in the opposite role: Samory appears in this record as the destroyer of Kong, burning the one apex France had named in its founding instrument, and taken on Ivorian soil in 1898. There was no anti-colonial ancestry here to wear as a crown.

Three variables, all pointing one way. That is either strong evidence or a sign that the study has stopped looking, and this

module records the worry rather than dissolving it. What can be said is that the three are not independent in the way they appear: the crop shaped the fiscal position, since Côte d'Ivoire was the milk cow *because* its cocoa earned the francs; and the absence of a resistance memory is partly the absence of a chair to resist from, which is this study's opening finding all over again.

What the case confirms, complicates, refutes

Confirms. That the default holds by alignment rather than conspiracy. That the seam is held open by distance. That an order whose belief never took stays expensive. That the weak link is nearer the top than the bottom. That a floor can be written off while every soldier is retained.

Complicates. The expected colonial shape, in four places. The reversed robe turned out to be *two* robes both facing home, because the ruled were never an audience. Withheld formation turned out to be a monopoly claim rather than an economy — Harris was offered free and expelled anyway. The extraction sorted by caste turned out to sort *within* the extracting class. And the collapse driven by the metropole's will emptying turned out to be driven by a *different colony's* war.

Refutes. Two things outright. First, the single exit dial: this colony ran an open border and an undiminished demand for four decades, which the single-setting model does not permit, and the resolution is that exit is a property of the asset rather than of the territory. Second, the assumption that metropolitan awareness is evidence against the seam: the shootings of 1950 were debated in the National Assembly and printed in the *Journal officiel* at a known page, and nothing followed.

What this colony teaches that the others did not

Gathered plainly, and in the order the study found them.

That a border drawn in Paris can enclose four different answers to the conqueror’s only real question — *whom do I deal with to get paid* — so that the cost of holding the whole is the sum of them, paid annually and for ever. That an order which once had a seizable centre and dispersed it is dearer to conquer than one that never had a centre at all, because the newcomer inherits no office to occupy and a people who still know themselves to be one.

That the date on a colonial officer’s published doctrine records when he judged his readers at home could be told, not when anything changed on the ground.

That where a conquering story fails with the conquered, the bill can be settled in wages instead of belief — the conquered themselves carrying the rifles — and that this is what lets an expensive conquest be held at close to a cheap one’s price.

That a settlement can claim an entire country and convert almost none of it, and that land a register never entered is land the register cannot take away; and that a grant made to a class which already owns its own base buys neither a servant nor a dependant but a partner, who can renegotiate because he can survive the arrangement’s end.

That when the ruled are not an audience the argument about the conquest moves wholly to the metropole and both sides of it are colonial. That withholding schooling was a claim to a monopoly rather than a saving, since a free formation producing exactly the desired subject was expelled. That where nothing is installed in a population, the year is scored by collections rather than ceremonies, and teaches prediction rather than conviction.

That a man’s ability to leave is a fact about what he owns rather than where the border runs, so the surest way to shut a frontier on a population is to get them to plant something — and that an extraction pursuing a rate can manufacture, in the hands of the people it extracts from, a durable asset it never meant to create, which makes the biology of a crop a fact about politics.

That the cheapest control of what people may say is a rule about who may hold a licence, not a censor; and that a fact raised in parliament and printed in the record is safer to an arrangement than a censored one, because everyone can see that it was looked at.

That liberties arriving from somebody else’s quarrel land as a grant rather than a settlement, and survive only where a class at the receiving end has a base of its own to hold them with. That absorbing critics forecloses more completely than shooting them, and cannot easily be told apart from success.

That in an empire the price at which a territory is valued is set by the most expensive one, so quiet colonies are released by wars they took no part in — and that a population never formed will, at the hour of departure, be unable to afford the departure, and its own leaders will say so.

That where the conquered were dispersed and few, the harm is done by concentrating them rather than by breaking their coordination, and the bill arrives a generation late in the medical records rather than the harvest returns.

And the comparative finding this study ends on: a class formed around property asks to be admitted; a class formed around labour asks for control; and only the second has to take the state to get it.

The counter-position, at full strength

Now the case against everything above, stated as its ablest advocate would state it and not as a straw man.

The test of an arrangement is what happened to the people who lived under it, and by that test the Ivorian road was right and the Guinean road was catastrophic. Two French colonies, one metropole, one fork, one season. Guinea took the romantic rupture and delivered its people a one-party state, a camp where prisoners were killed by the withholding of food, confessions read out on the national radio, an entire people declared hereditary traitors, and an exodus that on the ranges the sources support ran to a quarter or more of the population. Côte d'Ivoire took the unromantic association and delivered an economy that roughly doubled between 1960 and 1980, no confession camp, no manufactured enemy race, no emptied villages, and a country people migrated into. *The choice of 1958 was vindicated in the lives of the governed, which is the only test that is not a literary preference.*

And the colonial arrangement deserves part of the credit, because it built the class that made the right choice possible. It left African cultivators in possession of their own land and their own trees. It produced a propertied smallholder class of tens of thousands, not a landless proletariat and not a compradore elite living off a mineral rent. When the metropole finally asked the question, there was somebody in the country with something to lose and the sense to weigh it. That is more than most colonies left behind, and an account that cannot say so is measuring something other than human welfare.

That is the strongest form and it contains true things. Four refusals answer it, and none of them is a denial.

Refuse the syllogism. *It survived and prospered, therefore it was justified.* Durability is a fact about incentive structure, not a verdict. The arrangement was stable because a propertied

class's ledger read *stay* at every entry, and that class existed because an administration had ordered peasants to plant trees for its own receipts under a law that made planting the way to keep your ground. To call that vindication is to praise a machine for running. And the outcome argument cannot in any case be closed at 1980: the commodity terms of trade that funded the miracle did not hold, and the country's subsequent decades included a coup and civil conflict. This study has not examined that period and does not adjudicate it; it notes only that an argument resting entirely on outcomes must accept the outcomes that come later, and that no ledger closed at a convenient year proves anything.

Refuse the rigged comparison. Setting Côte d'Ivoire's outcome against Guinea's is not a comparison of conquest with self-rule. It is a comparison of two roads taken *after* the conquest, by two elites the conquest itself had formed, at a fork the metropole designed. Whatever it establishes about 1958, it establishes nothing whatever about 1893. And the foreclosed alternative is in the record and should be named: a West African federation negotiating with France as a bloc rather than territory by territory, argued for by a real current — Senghor's party, and a genuine faction inside the Ivorian leader's own — and defeated partly by the *loi-cadre*'s territorial design and partly by the Ivorian leadership's action against the Mali Federation in 1959. The comparison offered is between the option that won and the one option that lost most badly. The third was never tried.

Refuse credit for parsimony. This is the decisive answer in this case and it should be stated exactly. Everything the defence enters on the credit side was produced by the *same economies* that produced everything on the debit side. France did not leave African cultivators in possession of their land out of respect for African tenure; it declined to build a cadastre because it wanted labour rather than ground and could not afford a survey — and

the registry, when it existed on paper from 1906, went almost unused. That single economy is why the planters kept their trees. France did not build schools, and that same economy is why the country entered independence counting twenty lawyers and ten doctors. **The property and the ignorance came out of one decision, which was to spend as little as possible on a territory held by eight hundred and forty men.** You cannot bank the first as evidence of a benign colonialism while treating the second as an unrelated shortfall. The mildness of the endowment is a fact about the endowment, not about the character of the men who left it.

Refuse cynicism. And this cuts against the study's own temptations more than against the defence. The Ivorian planters were not dupes and their demand was not false consciousness: from where they stood, equal prices and equal access were the rational demand, and they won them. The men who voted yes in 1958 were not deceived; the case for association was a real case and was argued in public. The Harrist converts who kept the faith for nine years without clergy, texts or the teachers they had been promised held something genuinely their own, and naming its origin in one Liberian preacher's vision does not make it less theirs. The Baoulé and Kong orders were built conquests that became the furniture of reality, and saying so is not debunking them. And on the other side of the seam, the Frenchmen who believed in a civilising mission believed in it — which is exactly why a governor had to write four hundred pages to argue with them, and why that book exists for this study to read. A built thing that became real is not a lie. It is a thing that was built and then became real, and the people inside it are not fools for living in it.

The last thing the study is entitled to say

This study has not shown that the Ivorian road was wrong. It has shown what the road was made of.

The class that chose it was manufactured by planting orders issued for revenue, sheltered by a land law too cheap to enforce, admitted to the arrangement by one faction of a divided metropole that wanted a stick to beat another faction with, and taught over twelve years that working the channel paid and breaking it produced Dimbokro. Every one of those is a structural fact, and together they made *stay* the answer that class was overwhelmingly likely to give. A man also chose, and this study cannot separate the choice from the ledger and does not believe he could have either.

What the arrangement never produced, in sixty-seven years, was the thing its own doctrine had promised: a population formed and free enough to release its pressure as reform through channels its rulers did not own. It produced instead a single legal party that outlasted the colony that fathered it by thirty years. The counterweights that mattered in 1958 were property and a metropolitan quarrel — one of them accidental, the other foreign. Neither was a liberty, and neither was built here.

That is not a verdict on the men. It is a description of what was on the ground when the question was finally asked, and of who had put it there.

A note on sources.

This module introduces no new primary material. Every quotation, figure and date it relies on has been established, sourced and qualified earlier in this study, and the caveats entered there apply here without repetition — in particular the warnings on the caste price figures, on the syndicate’s founding

circular, on the referendum percentages, and the near-total absence of African casualty figures.

The Guinean side of the comparison rests on the companion volume of this collection, *The Plot That Would Not End*, and on the sources recorded there: the standard histories of the Fuuta Jalon and the Mande world, the scholarship on Samori Touré, the syntheses of R. W. Johnson and Ladipo Adamolekun on Touré's Guinea, Lansiné Kaba on the 1958 referendum, and the survivor testimonies and documentary reconstructions on which any account of Camp Boiro depends. The exodus and repression figures are given there in contested ranges and are used here only in that form.

A promise this study cannot keep. An earlier module undertook to compare the Ivorian and Guinean educated strata on the same basis at the end, or not at all. It cannot: this study has measured Ivorian schooling from the colonial statistical annuaires as reported in the Francophone literature, and has **not** measured Guinea on any comparable basis. The comparison is therefore not made. What is said instead is narrower and defensible — that the Ivorian ladder was extremely narrow in absolute terms, and that both counter-elites were formed by something other than the school. Anyone wishing to settle the point would need the *Annuaire statistique de l'AOF* for both territories, read year by year on the same definitions, and it would be worth doing, because it bears directly on this module's central comparative claim.

Three further gaps carried forward. The proportion of forest-belt land ever registered under the *immatriculation* system remains unestablished, and the argument about unconverted property leans on it. The electoral arithmetic of the two colleges in this territory remains unestablished, and the account of the two electoral colleges leans on it. The 1958 referendum address held at the Library of Congress remains unread and is the most valuable unexploited primary source in the whole study. None of

the three would overturn the study's structure; each would sharpen a claim it makes.

The scholarship that would oppose this reading most sharply. The account here of an African planter class formed substantially by administrative compulsion and holding property outside the colonial register runs against readings that treat that class as an autonomous indigenous accumulation with deeper pre-colonial roots, and against readings that make post-1950 administrative co-optation, rather than property, the decisive variable in 1958. This study has stated the property argument as a structure rather than a demonstrated causal chain, precisely because those alternatives remain live; the Ivorian agrarian-history literature — Chauveau and the plantation-economy scholarship above all — is where the argument should be tested, and a reader who breaks it there does the project's work.